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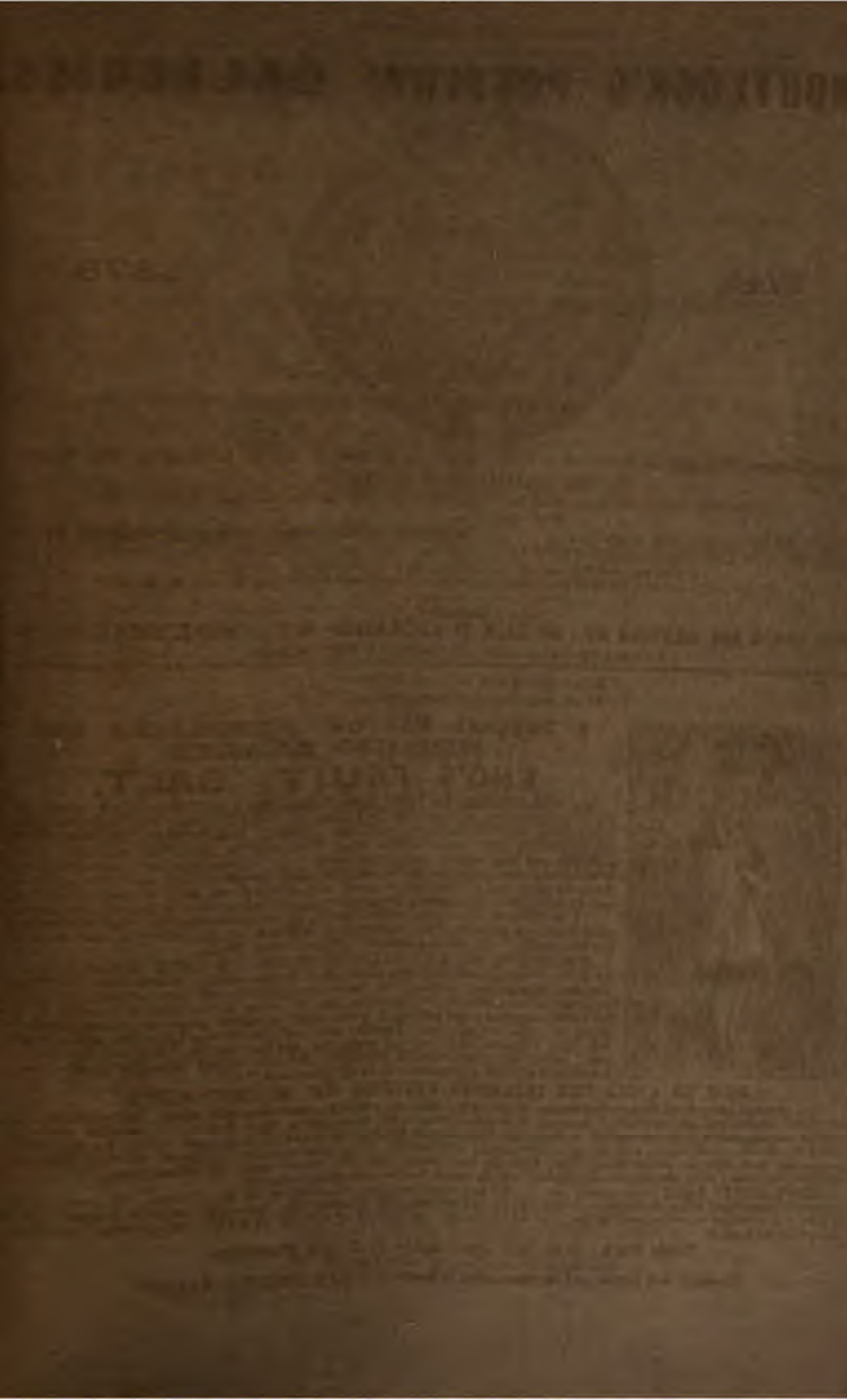


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LIGHT AND AMUSING LITERATURE

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CONTENTS.

	Cngravings.	DRAWN BY	PAGE
A Tale of the Summer		W. Allen	1
CRESSIDA :			
Jeanie Alleyne and Lewis Lefroy		W. J. Hennessy	27
Cressida arrayed for the encounter		"	120
'Am I such a tiresome model, then ?'		"	203
The secret souvenirs of her life ended there		"	308
She could bear the doubt no longer		"	402
Alone		"	485
Descent of the Matterhorn		E. Whymper	280
Forsaken		"	546
Love and Summer		W. Allen	183
My Evening Star		"	378
Rescue of Laidi by Uledi		"	457

Sals.

Blue Eyes and Golden Hair. By Annie Thomas	259, 355, 462
CRESSIDA. By Bertha Thomas, author of 'Proud Maisie:'	

Chap. XVI. Coming Home	1
XVII. Past and Future	10
XVIII. Jeanie's Romance	22
XIX. Turning a Point	97
XX. Shadows	105
XXI. A Meeting of old Friends	118
XXII. Faith and Unfaith	193
XXIII. Jeanie's Romance, concluded	204
XXIV. Shifting Winds	210
XXV. A Battue	289
XXVI. Sunrise and Sunset	298
XXVII. Nemesis	308
XXVIII. Paris	385
XXIX. Nuit Blanche	395
XXX. Parting	547
XXXI. Alone	550
Conclusion	558

CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET (with Twenty-seven Illustrations) :

Chap. XIII. The Monsters of the Deep	34
XIV. Some sensible Advice	40
XV. The Night Air always affects my Nerves	180
XVI. Amongst the Ants	186
XVII. Dreams of Grandeur	248
XVIII. An impertinent Fellow	254
XIX. The Guests of the Ants	325
XX. War	380
XXI. A terrible Accusation	420
XXII. I escape, and decide that I have had Adventures enough	424
Baby: a Water-colour Sketch	81, 158

Miscellaneous Papers.		PAGE
A Fortnight in Paris		66
A Pilgrimage in the Peak		413
A Walk in Saxon Switzerland		125
Alpine Ascents and Adventures		280
Christmas in Morocco		488
CLUB CAMEOS:		
IV. A Literary Man		220
V. Wits/		317
VI. Culture		497
Curiosities of the Paris Exhibition		532
Education of the Streets, The		481
Floral Forecasts for Winter		370
From London to the Land of Lorne		184
Popular Names and Singular Mottoes of British Regiments		555
Shooting Notes at Wimbledon		61
Sighs from a London Workhouse		561
Some East Anglian Worthies		472
SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL (<i>with Thirty-eight Illustrations</i>):		
Chap. IX. Lucerne		48
X. The Rigi		143
XI. From Basel to the Bernese Oberland		154
XII. Bernese Territory		229
XIII. The B�dali		234
XIV. The Western Lakes		389
XV. From the Lake of Geneva to the 'Mar de Glace'		847
XVI. Valais—The Valley of the Rhone		351
XVII. The Lateral Valleys		431
XVIII. Italian Switzerland—From the Lakes to the St. Gotthard		488
XIX. Chur and its Neighbourhood		505
XX. Through the Engadine		511
The Happy Valley: a Reminiscence of the Himalayas		568
The Journey to Jersey		379
The Orkneys as Holiday Ground		174
Through the Dark Continent		449
Poetry.		
A Coup d'Etat		554
A Tale of the Summer		80
Chance		567
Forsaken		546
Love and Summer		183
Marina		279
Modern Chivalry		531
My Evening Star		378
Princess Celandine's Song		94
The Mermaid		479
Acrostics and Answers	95, 191, 287, 383, 480, 572	

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JULY 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XVI.

COMING HOME.

It is quite superfluous for Poly-crates to dash his own prosperity and hurry himself to part with his ring. Only let him bide his time, and the fly will appear in his honey, the snails and the thorns in his rose-garden.

To Joe Kennedy the due annoyance came, not many weeks after that night at Sorrento, in the contents of a business letter from the family lawyer. The news was rather serious, and deeply vexatious to him for a variety of reasons.

He said nothing about it to Cressida at the moment, wishing to spare her all knowledge of the mess they were in until he should have hit upon some way out of it, and flattered himself meanwhile that he was keeping his own counsel. As if her woman's tact had not divined instantaneously that something was amiss. However, woman's tact had led her not to tease him with observation or questions. She felt confident, besides, that, whatever he might mean to do now, he would soon come of his own accord and tell her all. But here, to her surprise,

she found herself mistaken. Weeks went by; she waited and waited, and though he no longer constrained himself to hide from her that he had something on his mind which disturbed him considerably, he seemed as reluctant as ever to speak out. Then Cressida was piqued, and showed it. This added to poor Joe's depression, but still failed to make him break silence.

It was in August. They were spending the summer at the Italian lakes. The season had hardly begun, and the hotels were almost empty. One afternoon Cressida, coming into the reading-room, found her husband alone, and in a brown study for the second time that day. Now brown studies were not natural to him, and meant mischief. A feeling of unconquerable impatience took possession of her, and she made a little *mouse* that meant, 'This time I *will* know.'

'I'm afraid you're getting tired of this lazy life,' she began, sitting down to her fancy-work, where she could watch his face, and shaking her head at him with a smile. 'But never mind; our year's holiday will be over in six weeks now;' and she sighed re-

gretfully; 'you must think of that whenever you find time hang heavy on your hands.' But at this reminder of his approaching deliverance Kennedy's brow contracted afresh. 'It is *not* because he is bored,' concluded Cressida inwardly, but proceeding with her speech without any change of tone.

'By October, at latest, we are to be in England, aren't we? I like "abroad," when it means Italy, so well that here I can forget all other places; still I'll grant you that in cold weather, at least, there is a good deal to be said on the home side.'

Joe was looking more and more awkward and unhappy. He felt he had procrastinated too long—that it must come now—still he hung back, uncertain how to begin.

But Cressida precipitated matters by observing innocently,

'And I have always thought Monks' Orchard would be the most delightful place to winter in.'

Upon this Joe started off headlong—he could not beat about the bush—

'Cressida, it's some while now since I received a most disagreeable piece of intelligence, which knocked me over rather, perhaps even more on your account than mine.'

Cressida smiled. So much was no news to her. But what could it be that made Joe look so remorseful as well as miserable? She spoke back cheerfully:

'Is it so very terrible? Here we are, both of us, enjoying ourselves in this beautiful Italy—surely it can't be anything irremediable.'

'No; but it promises to be a considerable nuisance for a long time, to say the least.'

'Well,' urged Cressida, still playfully, 'but I want the particulars, please.'

'It's about my—our property

and income. I can tell you it all burst upon me like a clap of thunder.'

And Joe proceeded with his story at some length. The upshot of it was that time had tardily brought to light some further unsuspected liabilities of his cousin's; entanglements Tom had concealed from both his lawyer and his wife. To raise money it now appeared he had, at last, had recourse to transactions of a sufficiently ruinous nature. Once suspicion started, full inquiry had been made, and by this time Kennedy knew the worst, and the extent of these obligations, all of which he felt in honour, if not in duty, bound to discharge in full, at however enormous an inconvenience to himself. He could therefore give Cressida a plain statement of how their affairs stood. It amounted to this: that if, as he desired, all the encumbrances on the property were to be paid off in the course of the next few years, with a view to keeping up the family estate and residing there eventually, he and his wife would, in the mean time, be reduced to narrow straits.

The intimation that, under present circumstances, they could *not* reside there, he tried to convey as gently as possible, knowing well the disappointment it would be to Cressida.

She looked thoughtful and a little bewildered as she listened, but scarcely realising what she heard, and she asked presently,

'Then shall we stay abroad?'

'We could,' said Joe, fidgeting, 'but it would be a great mistake, and put off the happy end longer than ever. Nothing's hopeless, and what I've got to do now is to put my shoulder to the wheel to right matters as fast as may be. Then comes the question how. There's no doubt the estate has never been decently

managed. It might easily be made three times as productive, and soon would, if I were on the spot to look after things.'

'Well, but I thought you meant that it was impossible for us to live there, and that we could not afford—'

'To keep up the house,' Joe interrupted. 'No, that's what I meant. The expense would be a drain on our income that it couldn't bear just now. But I've been thinking if only I could be on the spot, as I said, to see to the improvements, look sharp after everything, be my own farmer as a man may say, till I'm in a position to play squire—'

'We might go to papa,' said Cressida dubiously, as he paused.

'We might,' echoed Joe, still more dubiously. Evidently, the suggested arrangement was one that recommended itself neither to husband nor wife. Then Cressida recollected that her father's sister was coming with her children to stay with him, so there would be no room for them at the rectory. And Joe, in fact, had long had another plan in his head, which, reassured to find Cressida taking their misfortunes so cheerfully and sensibly, he now ventured to communicate. There was an old farmhouse on the estate, not large, but in good repair, and which could easily be made fit for them to live in, as he modestly expressed it. Now it had occurred to Joe that they would do well to make this their homestead for the next few years. If, for that time, a tenant could be found for the big house, so much the better. In any case they would be the gainers incalculably, as their expenses at the farm might be of the slightest. He was ready to throw himself heart and soul into the business of the proposed reformations—

even in talking of them he became quite enthusiastic—and he undertook to answer for it that in the course of a very short time their finances would begin to look up again. There was no doubt, he said, that this was the best method to go to work, and that which promised speediest success. Still, if the plan were distasteful to Cressida he would try what could be done as an absentee. There would be no difficulty in letting the place advantageously for a long term of years; but that would amount to giving up the idea of ever making it their home.

Whilst listening to his arguments she had looked so grave and pensive that he ended hesitatingly, fearing that her inclinations declared against his pet scheme; but as he finished his speech she turned to him a face of sweet omen.

'Let us go to the farm, then,' she said gaily; 'it is a dear old picturesque place, and I was always fond of it. You shall see what a charming farmer's wife I can make.'

Joe was overjoyed. Her instant acquiescence touched him, and she became thrice an angel in his eyes. It was an undercurrent of self-reproach and conscientious penitence that had made the whole affair so particularly fretting to him. He felt now that he had been in a desperate hurry to regard and represent his position as secure and desirable, and that, knowing Tom's antecedents and double-dealing tricks, he ought to have waited and made sure that his fortunes were what he thought, before asking Cressida to share them. Supposing the disclosures had been worse—as they might, for Tom's folly knew no limit! She might reasonably, he thought, have shown great disappointment even as it was,

and he would hardly have blamed her for it. But she did not; she seemed chiefly amused and attracted by the novel idea of farming. Ay, and at the moment she was right glad in her heart to be able thus to give fresh, silent, signal evidence of the fact that it was *not* Kennedy's access of fortune that had endeared him to her—that it had done no more than smooth the way for a marriage, desirable to her on better grounds.

It was all settled in a few weeks.

'We mustn't let the grass grow under our feet,' said Joe, and he never did. By October the farm could be got ready for them, and there was no doubt that for two young people it would be a fairly comfortable place of abode. Cressida delighted her husband and herself by picturing to him their future mode of life in this English 'Trianon'—herself playing housewife or dairy-maid, shepherdess or flower-girl by turns. She would learn to bake and to preserve fruit—people looked pretty preserving fruit—he would see after his livestock and timber, and the improvements in farm machinery, subjects upon which Cressida felt vague as Joe on Dante and mediæval art; then in the evenings they would sit in the ingle-nook over an enormous log-fire; he should smoke if he liked, and she would read poetry to him (Joe was at present finishing his defective education under Cressida's superintendence). Then he would laugh and assure her that no sort of active work would find him a novice or a laggard, but that as for herself, if she chose, she need do nothing but attend to the climbing roses in summer, and in winter to her pianoforte.

October came and found them *en route* homewards. Cressida had suggested at the last moment that on reaching England they

should, as they were already on the wing, go a few hours out of their way to revisit Seacombe, a place so full of happy associations to them now. Joe caught at the idea, observing that they might not have so good an opportunity again for a long while, and they had decided to linger there a few days before proceeding. The country would be in its fullest autumnal beauty.

They got in at about four o'clock. Poor Joe found a pile of business letters awaiting him at the inn, some of them requiring an immediate answer. Having braced himself up with some tea he sat down to the task, and Cressida, knowing how long it would last, presently sauntered out—it was a brilliant afternoon, and she thought she would beguile the time with a stroll. Joe was dreadfully slow with his pen, and if distracted by her presence and conversation would never, she feared, get to the end of his correspondence.

A few minutes' walk brought her to the heights above the village, and she stood for a moment looking down on the roofs of the tiny port scattered on both sides of the harbour. There, at the extremity of the opposite hills, turning as it were its back to the road and its face to the steep bankside slanting down to the water, was Mavis Lodge, where she had spent the month before her engagement, the month after her marriage. She and Joe meant to go there again some day when they wanted change of air.

From this point she struck in to a little fern lane she remembered well, leading, about a mile onward, to the hamlet of Stoke Michael, where there was a picturesque bridge and church and a water-mill; a favourite haunt of artists and anglers. Cressida had taken this walk many and many

a time with her cousins and Joe, that memorable summer, and in the succeeding autumn with Joe alone. The loneliness and silence were pleasant and refreshing, and, as she strolled on aimlessly, allowed her to drift off into a train of meditations.

Coming back to England, and to begin in a new sphere. The strangest part was that she herself felt so little altered in any single respect. There was a time, it was very long ago—how she laughed when she looked back on it now!—when she had fancied, or taken for granted, that marriage would metamorphose her old self, create Cressida over again, and that the new Cressida would, or might, have different views, interests, aspirations, likings, aversions, weak points, and strong points from the old.

How was it in reality? As for that holiday year, it had been an interlude, a respite from everything but what was perfectly agreeable, and during which she had been perfectly happy and perfectly charming without an effort—an evanescent state of things, from which she had now emerged at much the same point from which she had started, and all the old habits of thought and of feeling gave floating distant signs of life, as much as to say, 'Here we are. What have you to say to us now?'

Though the generous fervour of unworldliness, kindled in her when first she heard of their reverses, had somewhat abated, there was an after-glow there still. Besides, a new element of affection had crept in and was taking its place in her being. Joe's life and hers seemed already so to belong together, that it was difficult to think of her own apart, and she was still far from the point, easy to reach, when such benefits as his trust and affection seem so

well assured that one ceases to prize or to look to their continuance, though their removal would be unbearable. But putting aside for a moment this point of view as quasi-sentimental, there was an uncertainty about her future far from satisfactory. Joe would do his best; but supposing his plans turned out badly, she *might* undeniably be coming back to shabby gentility and obscurity, instead of wealth and social influence and importance. For how long? As to the farm, she might idealise it in her imagination, tolerate it in reality, for a while; only how if, in its deficiencies in tangible advantages, it should turn out to be very much the old parsonage life over again?

That fern lane had many windings; you never saw more than half a dozen yards before you; the branches of the trees arched overhead, and there were thick copses on each hand. Cressida wandered on and on as in a labyrinth, and abandoning herself now to pleasant reverie. Skipping their approaching period of captivity, she was picturing inwardly all she would do when they were finally settled at Monks' Orchard, which must come to pass sooner or later. An idle childish dream, verified after all. She laughed. How oddly things had come round!

Suddenly, on turning a sharp curve in the path, she confronted another wayfarer;—all in a moment they stood there close to each other—a figure, a face at once most familiar, and yet so unaccountably strange to her, that the jarring impression took away her breath for an instant. The same—Yet no. And was she a spirit that he had nothing for her but that half-scared, half-defiant look—a look of which she could not say whether it were or were not recognition?

Such common marks as long illness may leave—pallor and alteration of feature and inanimate languor—though these may change, they could never alone have penetrated her in this way. Whence came that sudden light which had half revealed to her the story?—she knew him it concerned, so had the key—the story of a young life battling itself out under the inroads of these enemies of the mind against which every man must be his own physician; battling with heavy odds—well, but not too wisely, and getting the worst of it at last.

Norbert's illness—she had been told of that vaguely, though never of its nature, heard that he was mending, and shunned inquiring more particularly, but imagined him convalescent. And they had kept it from her!

But this sudden unaccountable meeting in the solitary lane had thrown her for the minute into the wildest confusion and dread. She stood aghast and speechless, feeling in her bewilderment as though she must be mad herself to see him thus. Her vision was distorted. It was a horrible spell, which she must break.

She tried to speak, but in her tremor could hardly articulate:

'Norbert, you here?' she began, advancing a step or two and extending her hand.

He gave a slight start backwards, seeming to recoil involuntarily at her approach, as before the hallucination of seeing a statue speak or move, made no answer, but continued to look at her more and more bewildered, and saying something impatiently to himself, which, in her disorder, she could not catch.

Cressida felt as if in a nightmare. It had lasted long—a minute. Fan came hastening out of the copse. She had turned

aside for a moment to gather a handful of ferns, when, hearing voices, she looked up and saw what had occurred.

She had grown rather pale herself, but gave no other sign of agitation of any sort. Tact and promptitude were becoming intuitive through ceaseless exercise. She advanced, shook hands with Cressida, darting a look of intelligence at her as she said, in a quiet decisive way,

'We are staying at Stoke Michael over here. Perhaps we shall see you another time, but we must get home now. Norbert, we ought really to be turning back, it is growing late; I forgot the time over my flowers. Come along.'

Sliding her hand under her brother's arm, she drew him gently and unresistingly away. The bend in the lane hid them both from sight almost immediately.

Cressida was left standing there by herself in the middle of the path, wishing at the moment, and most devoutly, that the earth would open and swallow her up.

She retraced her steps to Seacombe at hurried speed, reaching the inn in such a state of nervous agitation as to give poor Joe a considerable fright. As soon as she had recovered a little she related exactly what had befallen her. Joe, who knew no more than herself, turned duly grave when she pointed out her fears and suspicions, but set himself to tranquillise her as best he might. She had been startled, he said; it might turn out not to be so bad after all. He promised her faithfully to go over to Stoke Michael himself the next morning, find out where they were staying, and ascertain from Fan all the particulars of her brother's illness and convalescence. But in the mean time Cressida was told most au-

thoritatively not to torment herself. She must go at once to lie down and rest, and try to recover from the effects of the shock.

It had been severe; but Joe's manner, cheerful, calm (the calm of one whose conscience is clear as the noonday), but firm, seeming to forbid her to make herself unhappy, and taking the whole matter into his own hands, was comforting in a measure, and by degrees her painful excitement subsided.

When at last she slept, Joe's first proceeding was to make all the necessary arrangements for leaving Seacombe the next day. He telegraphed to the farm that they might be expected the following evening, and Cressida awoke to find all settled for their speedy departure. But Joe fulfilled his word, and walked over to Stoke Michael in the early morning. He returned, having, he said, had a long talk with Fan and heard everything. He promised to tell her the particulars when they got home, not before. It was bad, he admitted, but perhaps not so bad as she had feared. As to her hand in the matter, he hinted she might make her mind easy. She saw she must seem to comply. It vexed him so to see her fretting about it.

It would have needed a voice speaking out of heaven, at the very least, to convince Joe that Cressida need reproach herself in the smallest degree for the history as he had heard it, or that any other avoidable factor had been at work but Norbert's own weakness and folly. A robust healthy nature himself, untroubled with nerves, an absolute ignoramus in the terrible phenomena of depression, Joe was firmly persuaded that if a man was crossed in love or in any other incident of life, only an idiot would go on mourning over

spilt milk. It was his own doing if he let it prey upon his mind, and as to its preying on his health, that was all moonshine. Such things have happened, men have borne them without breaking down, and may bear them again. For those who give way, or those who have to fight it out in the dark, but only to have to succumb—it may be in the broad day at last—Joe had nothing but that pity which is nearest of kin to contempt. The fellow should have been more prudent—struck work if he felt unfit, taken plenty of exercise, instead of dosing himself with vile narcotics, gone home and had proper advice, and it would have been all right now.

Joe put himself into Norbert's place, and thought how differently *he* would have conducted himself. There is no doubt that he would; such a test would have been an easy test for him. Yet even for Joe there must be dangerous hurts, shocks that would severely try his mental equilibrium. Only his good angel had kept them out of his career hitherto, so that they had not entered into his imaginings either.

'By the way, whom do you suppose I met just as I was leaving the door? bound there on the same errand as myself, I suppose,' said Joe, as he was getting their things together for starting.

Cressida looked up inquiringly. 'Two fellows I should never have dreamt of seeing down here—Lefroy, the artist man, and Stephen Halliday.'

She smiled mechanically. It was a sign of her preoccupation and trouble that the slight circumstance and the unexpected name failed at that moment to call up her interest or curiosity.

Joe, who could be imperative with Cressida in any matter where he thought her health and well-

being were concerned, stuck obstinately to his resolution not to open his lips again on the subject until they had got home. The impression was not one to be slept off entirely in a night, and he was of opinion that if the unpleasant topic of that which had caused it must be brought up again, the longer this could be put off the better, and the more miles they could in the mean time put between themselves and Seacombe the better also. Women are such impressionable creatures. He surmised that the mere incidents of the journey, rapid change of scene and action, must distract Cressida in some degree, and in spite of herself keep her mind from brooding incessantly over the 'unlucky business,' as Joe, apt to be a little inhuman on matters disagreeable to himself through their grieving Cressida, persisted in calling the scene that had so unnerved her yesterday.

He congratulated himself on his judgment and foresight. The journey was tedious and long; before they got to Lullington Cressida was too overcome with fatigue to be able to think or talk diligently of anything in particular.

It was dark when they got to the station, and raining hard. The long drive in the jolting fly seemed interminable to Cressida, who at last from sheer exhaustion fell asleep with her head on Joe's shoulder, keeping him fixed in a most rigid and uncomfortable attitude, from which he dared not stir, not wishing to wake her, but which made him as desirous as herself to arrive. At last the conveyance pulled up jerkily in front of the farm, and Cressida awoke with a start.

'Now then!' said Joe, in a tone of great and pleasant expectation, and leaping out. It was pitch

dark. Not a light in the house, nor a sign of life about except some yelping dogs from the yard that flew at Joe's heels in hopelessly. He gave them a kindly dismissive kick or two, and began hammering at the door for some time in vain, exclaiming disconcerted, 'Why, hang it all, what *can* be the matter with everybody and everything? I telegraphed our train—told them we should arrive at eight.'

After a few minutes' delay a slipshod maid-servant appeared to open, a labourer came running across from the outhouses with a lantern, and their cold reception was speedily explained. Joe's rather clumsily-worded telegram had been misunderstood; the servants had made out that Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy were not coming till the next day, and things were rather behindhand.

Cressida came in, and was hurried, half-awake, through the entrance hall-kitchen into the sitting-room beyond. It was dark and chilly, and she stood there feeling somewhat cheerless and uncomfortable whilst Joe went to look after the luggage. He had fetched in the greater part of it himself before an extra man could be summoned. Was there anything to eat, he inquired. They must get Mrs. Kennedy some tea at once. Then he went into the sitting-room, and seeing Cressida shivering, to lose no time set to lighting the fire himself. His zeal was rewarded by such violent puffs of smoke as made the room uninhabitable in two or three minutes. Cressida took refuge in the kitchen, and there remained among the boxes and piled-up furniture whilst frantic efforts were being made to get the rooms ready overhead.

This was coming home with a vengeance, she thought, half-

laughing in the midst of the discomfort, whilst Joe was blaming himself and calling himself all manner of hard names for his hastiness and want of forethought when he took it upon himself to change their plans. He ought not to have taken for granted that the place could be got ready for them three days sooner on twenty-four hours' notice. They should have gone to London for a couple of nights, instead of rushing on to their goal and an uncertain welcome.

He was right glad when Cressida's tea made its tardy appearance. After a night's rest she would be quite herself again. There was certainly no danger of her questioning him about Norbert that evening, and to-morrow there would, he knew, be a thousand things to claim and divide her attention.

Waking the next morning her first impression was one of curious confusion. Where was she? What had happened? How in the world had she come into that funny, long, low room with the lattice-windows and white-dimity curtains? An hour later she stood by the open lattice leaning out and saluting the familiar woods of Monks' Orchard before her. Unchanged. And she? Ah, here indeed she felt herself the old Cressida again, the Cressida of three years past, before her engagement to Norbert, that fatal beginning of all her troubles. What had come between was a dream, part sweet, part sinister, and she was waking from it now to take up the thread of her former life just where she had left it.

But not as she had left it. Never alone any more, to fight her own battles against the world, and make her own way unaided. In Joe, rough, *borné*, elementary

though he might be, she had a faithful partisan for life, as well as an attached partner. Joe,—who would as soon have lopped off his own hand as wilfully do her an injury or wrong, who would resent any done to her as if to himself,—he would always be there to support her; thoughtful for her, and sympathising according to his lights, and desiring nothing better than to turn his energies to mould their life according to her desire.

Here was something to be grateful for in truth. One should be grateful for gratitude. Joe's devotion was a kind of gratitude, an unconscious, generous acknowledgment of the sunshine his wife had brought into his existence. For let him do what he would, Joe—and he felt it—must remain her debtor, as the gainer of what was of finer, rarer quality than it was in his power to bestow. The rise from restless dissatisfaction to passive contentment is not so great as that from patient contentment to the highest happiness it is in your nature to receive.

Cressida was in good spirits this morning. Joe had been downstairs early, anxious to get things 'ship shape,' as he put it, in the nautical phraseology he was fond of. Although he had done his utmost towards this by multiplying orders beforehand, his presence proved sorely needed to complete the work. Cressida went gliding about the rooms, exploring them inquisitively, as one might some newly-discovered lake-dwellings, or the excavations at Pompeii.

The old-fashioned brick-floored kitchen she approved. It was picturesque. The dresser, adorned with good old crockery-ware, the enormous fireplace with the fine iron dogs, these had local colour and character, and became the place well. The sitting-room was

not so pleasing. It was low, stuffy, had a shabby-genteel look about it, and the chintz was preposterous. All this, however, she proposed to civilise speedily. Her grand piano alone would occupy one half of the room, the prettiest of her wedding presents should furnish the other, and then no one would know it again. The tiny parlour opening beyond—their dining-room that was to be—gave no scope for her ingenuity, as it barely held a whist-table to dine at and chairs to correspond.

Of the offices outside she preferred the dairy, with its floor of brick flags, dim religious light, fountain playing in the middle, and big bowls of milk around. On the whole she thought she would like the farm immensely, and when Joe remarked, 'Not so bad after all,' she nodded approval.

It was not Monks' Orchard, of course.

There were doors that let in draughts, there were windows that would not work smoothly, there were bells of which the wires were entangled, and which all rang in concert. Joe found sufficient occupation for the first day in remedying these little household grievances. His wife should have things comfortable, that was his first care; and he set to righting matters himself by improvising a number of mechanical contrivances such as his soul delighted in. Cressida looked on amused, but wondering a little at the extraordinary interest her husband took in such things, necessities of civilised life to which, in her mind, it was a hardship to have to attend.

Thanks to his zealous exertions everything was put in order in the course of the day. Joe was in a state of overflowing activity and rampant animal spirits. His

trained energy for skilled manual labour, after lying idle for so long, was in tremendous force. But the future promised him more than sufficient outlet for this. The supervision of the estate, the working of the improvements he meant to introduce, would absorb as much of his faculties as he chose to give, and this employment was one after his own heart in every respect; he would even have been happier blundering and losing in that, than making thousands in any other capacity.

His chief fear was lest Cressida should feel dull or moped, as he might be obliged to leave her alone a good deal. She reassured him. 'Trianon' was new, and she enjoyed it. Then she had never played Dolly Varden before, but knew it might be a becoming part. She would have the daintiest chintz dresses made, simple of course, but coquettish somehow, and her wee lace caps must be pronounced bewitching. Joe was delighted with her masquerading, deriving even more amusement from it than herself.

One thing only remained to be desired—namely, that the result of his investigations and financial calculations should prove satisfactory. That they should not was a contingency so unpleasant to Cressida's imagination that she had put it aside.

Joe, in truth, had more cause for fears than hopes upon the subject. But so long as he could put his shoulder to the wheel he was always sanguine, and during those first weeks he encouraged her to believe the best.

CHAPTER XVII.

PAST AND FUTURE.

It was no mere chance that had brought Halliday and Lefroy on

the scene that morning at Stoke Michael. When some time previously they had first mooted the idea of joining company for a short walking tour, and had agreed to start on it together in October, Lefroy at once suggested South Devon; and they had taken Seacombe into their route expressly on account of his desire to visit his invalided friend, Norbert Alleyne, now staying in that neighbourhood, and whom Lefroy had never seen since what he termed 'the crash.' It was a melancholy duty, but one which was facilitated and rendered rather less melancholy by being thus combined with a pleasant sketching trip in good company, and amid some of the finest scenery in England.

Nothing could be prettier than Stoke Michael itself—an old-fashioned well-built village, nestling at the foot of the hills at the head of a creek stretching up from the river. Among the miscellaneous habitations of which it consisted was a large superior sort of cottage belonging to a respectable childless old couple. The wife had been for many years a faithful servant in the Alleyne family; her husband was a superannuated yachtsman, comfortably off, and who still, from time to time, did light jobs on the vessels that congregated in the neighbouring harbour of Seacombe. The far-famed picturesqueness of the surrounding country never failed annually to attract down twice as many tourists as the local inns could accommodate, and the good folks above mentioned, like other villagers about, found it profitable to rent a larger dwelling than they wanted for themselves. It was here that Fan and her brother were established for the winter.

Since the collapse, six months

ago, and the subsiding of the pressing danger, there had been no real amendment. The evil had assumed a milder form, but did not promise to be the more curable for that. Among the many wise men that were called in to consult together, shake their heads, and shrug their shoulders, there was one, with a great name, who held out hopes of a gradual recovery, supposing further relapse could be avoided. It was an uncommon, a delicate case. The local disorder was accompanied at present by such complete physical prostration and shaken health that it seemed on the cards that with the restoration of strength to the system might come also the healing of the mind. Possible, and no more. The probability was, that the next six months would decide.

When, things being at this point, Norbert had been recommended to winter in a milder climate and Devonshire and the sea suggested, Fan thought instantly of old Biddy, so long their nurse that she had become like a member of the family, and whom, since her marriage, they had more than once been over to see in her comfortable home near Seacombe. She devised the scheme, and broached it at once, to the great approval of the physician. Thanks to her, it was carried out as soon as it was thought prudent for Norbert to move. Fan's resolution, and still more her quiet practical helpfulness, had taken her own family by surprise. Never in her life had she pretended to have the least turn or taste for sick nursing. Since a mere child she had been heart and soul in her books, and counted it a hardship to have to apply her hand or her head to ordinary feminine avocations. Yet now, when all around her were at their

wits' end what to do and how best to meet this new and overwhelming misfortune, it was she who stepped to the fore, threw herself into the breach, and showed by successful action both her determination and ability to do all that could be done to mitigate present things for Norbert—to reclaim him a future, if that might be.

'And I must confess that for a young girl of eighteen to insist on coming to bury herself in an out-of-the-way place like this, as good as alone, with a mad brother, seems to me about as daring and eccentric a proceeding as one can imagine,' observed Lefroy to Halliday, as, a few days after their first visit to Stoke Michael—on which occasion they had not been admitted—they were walking over to repeat it, 'even for a strong-minded girl like that.' Lefroy had a pet aversion for all strong-minded people himself.

'Still, from another point of view,' objected Halliday critically, 'I suppose you might look upon it as a piece of heroism—mistaken heroism, possibly. I don't think the father ought ever to have allowed it.'

'He did try to prevent it, I know,' said Lefroy. 'Jeanie Alleyne told me; and a very odd story it was. He began, as he always does, it seems, by putting his veto upon the plan, and there was a regular family scene. This girl Fan went and told him to his face that he had done his best, again and again, to ruin her brother in the past, and that he had no right to interfere now, or words to that effect. It was all true, I believe—every one knows what a Tartar and bully he is; still, this plain speaking must have sounded rather bold, even shocking, coming from such a young lady. Quite enough to infuriate a violent-

tempered man—a man who, only think, when he's in a rage, throws things about, breaks the china, and so on. He hasn't the slightest control over his temper; they can hardly ever get a servant to stay in the house; and as to his wife, she wouldn't dare for her life to answer him.'

'Well, what did he do to this girl?'

'O, he let her have her own way,' said Lefroy ingenuously. 'One would almost think he must be afraid of her. It serves him right—to be beaten on his own ground;' and he laughed. 'I always stood in awe of her myself, you know; she dressed so funnily, and answered you so shortly—the sort of girl that would be always in extremes. But one must admire her courage, of course.'

On reaching the cottage, Lefroy, in his joint impatience to do the part of a charitable friend, and to satisfy his mind as to Norbert's actual state, was glad to be told that he might see him this morning. He was slowly recovering, said Fan, from a fresh nervous attack, accompanied by fever, that had come on some days ago, and was not yet strong enough to leave his room. However, as Norbert not only recognised his old chum, but seemed glad to have him there, Fan presently reappeared in the sitting-room below, where Halliday had been left and was beginning to feel himself rather *de trop*. Nobody wanted him here. Why had he come? It had been partly on his own account.

The mystery hanging over Norbert Alleyne's illness had a private undesired interest for him, unable as he was to rid himself of a sense of indirect connection with that young man and part of his history. There were one or two points about the past he would

have liked to have cleared up, though he felt pretty well satisfied in his mind how it had all been. Little though he knew of young Alleyne, he had found a few facts sufficient to evolve a portrait out of his moral consciousness. It was not flattering; and he was even more firmly persuaded than Joe that if anybody was to be pitied here, it was probably Norbert's relations.

'Perhaps you prefer to stay with the others?' he said, as Fan came in and shut the door. 'Pray tell me outright if you want me to go.'

'I came away because I thought they were better alone,' Fan replied plainly. 'Mr. Lefroy is gentle and sensible, and just the right company for a little while. I sha'n't leave them long, or Norbert will get tired or nervous.'

She sat down by the window, at as great a distance from her guest as the size of the room permitted, looking away from him at the peep of autumn landscape out of the narrow casement.

'I waited, hoping to hear your report,' said Halliday, by and by. 'Is there, do you think, any material improvement in your brother's health?'

'None,' said Fan. 'Things have gone worse lately. Then a few days ago something happened that threw him back, you know.'

'How was that?'

'We met Mrs. Kennedy by chance,' replied Fan, turning round and looking him straight in the face—'met her in the lane here, quite suddenly. It was an accident—a little thing, but it did him harm. Any excitement does now; and this, I believe, might very well have killed him. Even now I cannot tell if that would not have been better.' . . .

Her eyes fell. So marked and expressive a change had come

over her look and manner since Halliday's last meeting with her that he seemed scarcely to recognise the person he was speaking to. The childish vehemence, talkative fits and starts, the ingenuous uppishness, were gone. Something grave, constant, womanly had come into her countenance, and there were outward marks there, in eyes and features, telling of the wear and tear of unremitting watching, of anxious days and nights, and powers of general endurance severely tested. But he might search in vain for a trace of yielding anywhere, of silent appeal to the commiseration of other people, or lurking commiseration of self. The girl might have that in her of which heroines are made, but the sort that put in no claim to acknowledgment, and of which the world, as a rule, knows nothing.

'What is the exact history of his illness?' began Halliday abruptly, her last words causing him to come out, more undisguisedly than he had anticipated, with the question in his mind. (Though far from over-conscientious, he always liked to know exactly how he and that inward monitor stood with regard to each other.) 'It is not idle curiosity on my part, I assure you,' he added, 'that makes me wish to know.'

Fan hardly needed to be told that. Halliday spoke seriously, and she felt sorry for him just then, exaggerating to herself immensely both his original responsibility in the matter and the amount of compunction he was feeling now. However, she was going to say what she thought, and not to soften down anything or trim it, for the sake of sparing him some unpleasant moments. She listened, without looking up, as he continued,

'How far, now, do you sup-

pose the mischief of your brother's illness—' he hesitated significantly; but as Fan showed no disposition to meet him half-way or help him out, he resumed plainly,—'how far can anything in this be laid or traced to—to Miss Landon's conduct at that time?'

'The break and the way of it,' put in Fan suddenly, for him. 'Anything? Everything, I suppose.' She spoke with some effort, stopped short, and then added naively, 'But then, you see, he was like that.'

Halliday's brow contracted; he pushed back his chair with an involuntary movement of impatience.

'You think it's not true,' said Fan, in her downright way; 'you think people don't die or go through very much for that sort of thing in these days, or that those who do are very weak and contemptible. O, perhaps you're right in the general,' she admitted parenthetically, as something reminded her oddly that it was not so long since she had thought the same.

'Was there anything so very exceptional here?' suggested Halliday incredulously.

'My brother and Miss Landon had been friends for years,' said Fan simply; 'he was always seeing her; and as for loving her, it was quite impossible not to.' For the moment she had entirely forgotten Halliday's past relations with Cressida; she was thinking only of her own old warm admiration for her friend. And though Cressida had been the author of a trouble so dark to Fan that hereafter all possible troubles in her life must pale beside it, the old feeling at times would flash out again still.

'But I was a mere child then,' continued Fan, who from the distance of twenty-four months look-

ed down with unmitigated disdain on her former inexperienced sixteen-year-old self, 'and saw nothing of it all—he was always very reserved, and one never knew what was going on in his mind—till they were engaged. Then I knew, because—'

She paused, and then resumed coldly, with a mixture of brusquerie and constraint,

'Perhaps you heard something about his having had so much talent for music?'

Halliday had chanced to hear it spoken of more than once in a general way, and more than one fashionable amateur remark philosophically what a pity it was that that young fellow had been 'born a gentleman and not a mountebank, or some petty bandmaster's son.' For in the latter case he would perhaps have done great things in the musical way; but that now his nest was so well feathered for him that he knew better than to divert himself from his main chance—an uncle who might in time let him in for more money than he knew how to spend—by running after strange gods—musical idols, for instance.

'That was what he ought to have lived for, would have lived for,' Fan continued. 'He had been forced into a way of life he hated; he used to say he felt there like a fly with its wings pulled off. Why, you couldn't look at him without seeing that he wasn't the stuff that business people are made of. The effect on him was all bad; it was just changing him, dragging him down, making him indolent, slack, good for nothing. He knew it too. But he had decided to leave it, and break with it for good, come what might, when Cressida—'

'Excuse me,' interrupted Halliday, who was listening now with a different expression and franker

interest, struck by something here that did not quite coincide with his own assumptions; 'I was told that your brother's connection with Mr. Marriott's business was one that offered him the promise of stepping in while very young to considerable fortune. Am I to understand you that he desired, contemplated, throwing this away, and for the reasons you gave?'

'Of course he did,' retorted Fan trenchantly. 'At least, I *know* it must sound wild to you and to people who didn't understand him; but he was quite right; he was clever enough to have got to the front some day; and even if he hadn't, it would have been ever so much better, as he would be living a true life, for what he cared about.'

She spoke defiantly, quite unconscious of how far her visitor's sympathies were being gradually enlisted on her side in some measure as she explained.

'At that time too a gentleman had just offered to take him to Germany—give him an opening. It was the very chance he was looking out for. He would have done it; he had spirit and hope enough for it then—if ever he had wanted anybody to keep house for him, I would have gone, *nothing* should have prevented me; we might have been there together now, he getting on, doing himself justice in the world—'

'Instead of which—'

It was one of those cutting impressions that strike like a lash. Fan's features contracted as it crossed her, but she resumed stoically,

'He let it go; put all that out of his head, because Cressida promised to be his wife.'

They were both silent. At last Halliday ventured,

'Would they have been happy, do you think, if they had married?'

'Never mind what I think,' returned Fan evasively. 'You asked me to tell you what happened, and I'm telling you. It meant something, I suppose, that he should be ready to give up for her what was ever so much dearer to him than anything else in the world. He never would have cared for display and luxury, not a bit; but life with her would have been another thing. *She* would have been his home, and he loved her in that sort of way that he would have found enough in living for another person—if she was that person—quite enough to satisfy his nature and make him happy. It was the first time in his life he saw things smooth for him. It made a great change; he grew spirited and active again, and seemed to take a fresh start those six months. You know the rest,' she concluded, breaking off bluntly.

'Not all,' he objected. 'What you are talking of was long before this illness.'

A shade came over her face as she replied,

'Half a year. They said he was all right. We never saw him. I used to fancy things, though.'

Worse things perhaps than those which had come to pass. For it had always seemed to Fan that if Norbert had grown wicked, or bitter, and turned against the world, she would have grown wicked too.

She now told the sequel; so much of it at least as she knew. The outline had been made pretty plain since by stray half-coherent admissions from Norbert himself, put together with what fragments of information she could gather from various sources as to the past, and her own observation in the present. A sad picture, but meeting us ever oftener in one

phase or another, of the mysterious inroads of nervous illness that begin insidiously by impairing the instincts and principles of judgment and foresight.

Left alone to destroy or to be destroyed by his secret enemies—the long outbreak of bitter devastating feeling, the blank leaden depression that seemed the only change from it—Norbert stood self-impelled into living it down. That, and the effects of the mental strain, the unnatural exhaustion, followed by loss of sleep and rest, so damaging in its turn to judgment and common sense, as to make measures apparently foolish, nay, half desperate, seem reasonable or inevitable. A dull idea above that he must 'go on.' A dim, unanswerable instinct underneath letting him know that this was a case for self-help or none, a case when a man must stand or fall by his own strength of mind and body, by his own power of resistance to the fiends molesting him, which will or will not enable him to pull through the disturbance, and bear whatever sharp temporary remedies he may be driven to, to keep it within bounds. His peculiar temperament, ungenial home, all helped to isolate him. His monotonous occupation—from which he no longer felt any eagerness to escape—was against him. He is thrown back on his own self, as he and life have made it, to fare accordingly.

The higher moral instincts, forbidding him to stoop for relief to what would have blunted or perverted them, having been kept singularly intact in him hitherto, proved the strongest now, asserting themselves still, and prevailing, even when health and intellect were weakened. But the conflict was one that must have told severely on a far less delicate

organism, and here the finer springs of life had in time been touched, as was shown.

First, by the gradual, painful alteration of disposition; a senseless irritability and exaggerated sensibility growing on him and leading him to isolate himself more and more, vividly conscious of how intolerable and ridiculous this nervousness must appear to others. Sounds were intensified and became distracting to excess; the conversation of his friends grated on him. A secret apprehension of the nature of the malady inclined him both to avoid society and observation as far as possible, and shrink from taking advice, and this dread came as a fresh torment to aggravate matters. At last, feeling he could no longer trust himself, he was not his own master, and too weak to fix his attention at will, he absented himself from his work—gave some excuse. Nobody thought anything of it. Heart and soul in their own affairs, how should they have leisure? His non-attendance was barely noticed by his employer or comrades.

For three days he had shut himself up. His lethargic landlady, who regarded her lodger as a nice, quiet, but slightly eccentric, young gentleman, and had never seen reason to trouble herself to pry into or interfere with his habits, was tardily roused, when it came to his not recognising her one morning, to a sense that it might be desirable to give the alarm to his friends.

Since his partial recovery his state had been variable. There were bad intervals, periods of excitement and restlessness when his ideas got confused, his senses distorted; but at times he was perfectly lucid, though depressed, a consciousness of his real condition weighing him down, and it

was then that Fan's familiar presence was most needful to him, the best help to recall him to his old natural modes of thought and alleviate the feeling of estrangement from his fellow-creatures.

Fan, whilst she was speaking, had half forgotten that her listener was almost a stranger. She dropped suddenly into a more distant tone as she concluded :

'That is all that I know, or anybody knows, of how it came about. There were a lot of things, all against him. And he has certainly never had any help from anybody.'

'Except yourself,' said Halliday naturally. 'I don't suppose there are many sisters who would be so willing to do all you are doing now.'

Even as he spoke he felt a certain rapidity and inappropriateness in compliments on the present occasion. Fan did not seem to care for the praise either, and made no answer.

'Have you been with him ever since?' he asked.

'Ever since.'

'Does she mean to be his *garde malade* for life, I wonder?' mused Halliday.

'I'm always thinking,' she said, with the old vehemence breaking out, 'if only he could have another chance—'

Halliday glanced at her as the idea crossed him involuntarily.

'And now, if the day comes when you are sure he never will?'

Perhaps Fan understood; perhaps the same thought had passed through her own mind. She turned away, and there was a moment's silence.

'He likes having you, then,' said Halliday; 'he is well enough for that?'

'Yes, in a way. He would miss me now. I know his moods, feel the turn things are taking,

before any one else can, and it saves him something. The doctor says women are better and quicker at that, and that there are cases when a great deal depends for good or harm on mere trifling things, and that this is one.'

'Can he occupy himself with music at all?'

Fan shook her head.

'That's the worst. I don't dare talk to him about it at any time. It depresses him mortally, to be reminded of his old power there, and feel it lost and gone. He hates the mention of it.'

'Well,' said Halliday, as cheerfully as he could, 'so long as there's any reasonable hope of his recovery, you must allow me to say I think the part you are taking a noble one—' He was going to add something else, but here they were interrupted, and a few minutes afterwards he and Lefroy were leaving the house together.

'He'll never recover,' said Lefroy, shaking his head despondingly as they walked on to Seacombe. 'I should say there wasn't a chance of it.'

'Did you find him so much worse than you expected, then?'

'O, it's not only the head evil,' Lefroy explained, 'but his whole constitution seems so shattered, and I don't think he's the rallying power to repair the harm done already.'

'He's very young,' objected Halliday, though in his heart he feared his friend was right, 'and his sister seems to think there's ground for some hope.'

'Well, I suppose they don't like to tell her the worst at once,' said Lefroy; 'it will be less dreadful for her if she takes in the certainty by degrees.'

'Do you know who attends him?' asked Halliday suddenly.

'A fellow in Seacombe. He

was great in his day, but has retired from practice, and only goes out to particular cases. Quite the best man in England for this sort of thing—made his fortune by tinkering up cracked or broken brains, and built himself that large house yonder above the harbour, where he has the best yacht you ever saw.'

'You might look him up,' suggested Halliday, 'before we leave, and get his candid opinion as to your friend's case, and how it's likely to end.'

Lefroy was willing.

'But as to what it will be, I fear there is little doubt. Reminds me of the tragic story of the German poet, Holderlin. Do you know it? He left home young, in perfect health, talented, brilliant, to go to France, where he had obtained a good appointment. He disappeared, and after a short time returned, but a total wreck, aged, gray-haired, his mind gone, all between remained a mystery. I always thought that would be such a grand subject for a poem. I wish you would try your hand upon it one of these days.'

His companion did not respond. His thoughts were running upon what he had heard.

A young man, with a long purse, and who thereby induces a girl whose affections he cannot win, to promise to marry him, gets thrown over, and not long afterwards seems to justify the slight cast upon him, by a complete breakdown, was not *a priori* the likeliest person in the world to appeal to the sympathies of Mr. Stephen Halliday.

Fan's account had necessarily been slight and imperfect, but he could fill in the outline for himself so far, at least, as to recognise some injustice in his fancy picture.

The action of that self-absorbing ideal love, rare, since it can

only arise in a rarely delicate mind, a force all powerful for good, but converted here by mischance into a thing of torment; the ordeal of a finely wrought, over-sensitive nature, that may suffer unduly, but will not belie or degrade itself—these, though far removed from anything in his more fortunate experience, could not find him blind and deaf and unintelligent to their significance. It had roused a kindlier sort of interest, which he would have been willing to show in some less empty way than mere words.

It prompted him first to make the inquiries with Lefroy, as he had suggested. But the report, confirming Fan's account of things up to the present point, supported Lefroy's darker prognostications as to the future.

Joe's version to Cressida he took the liberty of making more hopeful, even when it came to stretching a point. She suspected as much, and she could not dismiss her deeper solicitude in so summary a fashion as he seemed to desire. Neither could she always be thinking about it. There was very little to remind her, everything to distract her; and in time the impression she had thought would last for ever did begin to wear off so far as to lose its power to depress her.

In a few weeks the new inmates of the farm had fallen into a routine that bade fair to continue with little variation, the days succeeding and repeating each other like so many drops of water trickling down on their heads. Joe rose early; how early Cressida could only conjecture, for by the time she woke he had generally been up and out for hours. At breakfast he would put in an appearance with an appalling appetite, having satisfied which he would hasten out again, and the

morning was passed in going his rounds, interviewing his bailiff, consulting about the timber to be felled, the stock to be sold, the extra hands to be taken on, an infinity of conversation appearing to be an indispensable element even in the smallest transaction. Then he liked to be ubiquitous, and there was no denying that his presence was a useful check on the British labourer's inveterate idleness, and that in his good-natured way he could talk the men out of their pious hostility to innovations in general, and the improved machinery he wanted to introduce in particular. Sometimes he returned to luncheon, but there was always more business of the same sort, imperatively requiring his presence, in the afternoon. In the evenings, as was natural after having walked not less than ten or twelve miles in the course of his day, he was apt to be drowsy; and after dinner it was only by dint of really heroic exertions that he could keep himself in talking trim, and sometimes even these failed; then he would humorously request Cressida to pelt him with sofa-cushions, but she was merciful, and forbore.

There was a pony-carriage among the farm-chattels, which only wanted a suitable pony, Joe decided, to be the very thing for his wife to drive. She would thus be enabled to get about independently of him. One day he sighted the right animal in a butcher's cart at Lullington, gave chase to the treasure-trove, ran it into port, struck a bargain on the spot, and the next day introduced his prize to Cressida in triumph. She was not quite so enthusiastic about the beast as he; but what could she know of horse-flesh, he remarked patronisingly. Nothing, Cressida must admit; but judging from the specimen before

her the present question was one of skin and bone. But after the first trial she granted that it was a capital pony, as ponies go, carried her along like the wind, and she made use of it now and then, though rather for his pleasure than her own. It was a pity that the basket-carriage had an uncouth and old-fashioned appearance, shook frightfully, and now and then, as Joe said, 'sprang a leak.' But he loved it all the better on that account; there was such real enjoyment to be got out of mending it himself, and Cressida felt it would be hard-hearted to express her candid opinion on the subject.

Soon came the question of society. There was any quantity of it for them to choose or decline, as they might please. All Lullington rushed to call upon them. Joe was universally popular, with high and low; and among those leading ladies who had most loudly decried Cressida Landon, there was a strong agreement that it would never do to be found wanting in attention to Mr. Kennedy's wife. This flightiest of girls was no doubt, in the course of grace, toned down quickly into the sedatest of matrons. At all events they must go and see, and Cressida found her old enemies polite, almost gushing. Of course, whatever ill-natured things there was the slightest colour for saying were duly proclaimed upon the housetops. They amounted mostly to this: that Cressida had married Mr. Kennedy for his money, and to get to Monks' Orchard, and there was much virtuous rejoicing at her having been partly foiled. She was overwhelmed with malicious condolences—implied or outspoken. Cressida was more than a match for her adversaries; her superior power of repartee, greater readiness, and

sharper perception would have enabled her to demolish them with ease. But she preferred this time to be magnanimous, and to give proof of her higher social aims by converting everybody to her side. Her pretty winning manners, and the *naïveté* and frankness with which she filled her new and rather difficult position, disarmed the spiteful and the scornful alike. She preferred not to court society for the present, but on other accounts. She and her husband had come to the farm to be very economical. Not to mention how trying it would have been to appear in cheap toilettes and always the same ones, where she had been accustomed to rival and outshine all the county by the variety and ideal prettiness of her dress, she could not afford to return these civilities and entertainments—let alone to eclipse them. When one day she and Joe talked the matter over together, Cressida confessed that in her opinion it would be better to decline all invitations whilst in their present uncertain position, with their heads under water. Joe was unspeakingly relieved to find her of this mind. It was exactly what he most wished, though in his good-nature he was prepared to victimise himself if her inclination had pointed strongly the other way. Long dinners and evening-dress were at all times great trials to his patience, and he was thankful to be let off thus for an indefinite period. They would retire from the world, they agreed laughingly, and live for themselves alone, until the glad day, added Cressida, when Monks' Orchard should open to receive them at last. A glad day which, however, as the winter advanced seemed to recede further and further, till the whole picture of the future seemed to be

slowly changing, and threatened to present itself to her in sombre and most unwelcome colours.

Joe still talked hopefully, and by dint of persevering talking succeeded in feeling hopeful as ever for a long time. Everything would go finely, he maintained; but when pressed for the grounds of his confidence they came to this—that everything would go finely enough if he had, or could afford to borrow, the amount of ready money he believed desirable to expend on the estate. But his plight was peculiarly unfavourable to his carrying out his cherished schemes. Not only were his private resources for the present effectually crippled by Tom's legacy of ruinous obligations;—bequeathing to his successor the choice of continuing to pay exorbitant interest on, or begging himself to clear off, the loans;—but Joe found that these notorious extravagances, and the neglected state of the property, had the effect of raising special difficulties in the way of borrowing the money he wanted, and at the terms he wanted, on the estate. That the return would be rapid and ample he had no doubt; but there was room for two opinions it appeared, and that it was a speculation more than precarious, so far as immediate profit was concerned, was the prevailing one.

He had believed he would speedily find some friend or private individual who might be induced to enter into his schemes, agree to share present risks, advance the money and wait for his profits, if seasons were bad, or delays or hitches occurred. But the sum he wanted was considerable; moreover Tom, during his lifetime, had sponged so ruthlessly on every friend of his own and his cousin's, that the latter was effectually debarred from seeking

the reinforcements he now wanted, in the same quarters.

Meantime months were slipping by, bringing no opening. But Cressida noticed that every time Joe went up to London to see his man of business he returned more downcast, silent, and uneasy looking than the last. Anxiety affected him like physical illness, unmanned and made a child of him. Cressida knew too well what interpretation to put on these fits of gravity, and if she shunned asking many questions on the subject it was because she forecast and dreaded the fuller explanation that she might have to hear. But at last she decided that she could bear anything sooner than the vague apprehensions now running away with her.

'Tell me the worst,' she said to him one evening. Joe was going to town next day to consult with his lawyer, and she had made up her mind that she must hear now exactly how matters stood.

He told her. It seemed almost certain that he would have to give up his dreams of improvements carried out on a large scale, of capital so invested as to give chance of a speedy and rich return. Though he conscientiously believed in the infallibility of his proposed measures, as he believed in the existence of America, yet he could not absolutely guarantee the results for the next few years, or make offers that would tempt a stranger into partnership. If, therefore, he were to be denied the means of completely extricating himself and making a good start, what threatened them in future? Not ruin, certainly, but straitened resources and indefinite delay. They need not sink; but with their income hampered as at present they need not hope to rise, or at best so slowly that it changed the face of things entirely.

Years must elapse before, if confined to their actual resources, they could get clear. Years more before, at this computation, the reforms that were to make them rich could be carried out.

This was the pill that Cressida had to swallow. Even Joe did not quite apprehend what a heavy one it was. Now she had come from abroad armed from top to toe with good, nay heroic, resolutions—resolutions it would have required an accomplished heroine to fulfil without a struggle. She had determined, whatever might be in store for her, not to complain or be unhappy. So much, she acknowledged, was the least price she could pay to redeem herself in her own eyes and other people's. Theoretically she was prepared for a garret and a crust; but she had all along been secretly buoyed up by Joe's assurance that their time of indigence, however sharp, would be short. With a reasonable prospect of Monks' Orchard, and her sphere as its mistress, shining at not too great a distance, she would even now, she thought, have murmured at nothing—even now, when the novelty of farm-life had worn off, and she had found out several points about it that she did not approve either for herself or for her husband. Personally, when all was said, she felt misplaced, trammelled, thrown away. Joe, for his part, was only too well contented. His very partiality for a rough, boorish, unpolished life, she dreaded his indulging over-much, and she liked to have outward circumstances come to her aid to counteract it.

It was well enough for a year or two; but for a permanency never. Looking on she foresaw how they would be clogged, straitened, and have to remain very much as they were year after

year—perhaps till she died, or grew old and ugly, and had left off caring about things. The best part of her life meanwhile would be passed in waiting, hoping, and being disappointed. It was not surprising that she had lost confidence in Joe's more sanguine calculations. She knew now that he could not help seeing things *couleur de rose* at times if he wished it. His predictions in his own affairs had proved signally wrong more than once; and to-night Cressida, who had hitherto held up bravely, was startled by a new and fearful apprehension that perhaps it was not people's stupidity, as Joe represented and believed, that stood in the way of his working out his plans. She knew nothing of business herself, and to distrust Joe's prudence was like feeling the ground shake under her feet. No doubt Tom, too, in his time had always believed in the infallible success of his wild speculations.

This was the worst perspective that had yet suggested itself to her imagination, and made her look so grave for the moment that Joe was much concerned.

'Come, cheer up,' he said hopefully; 'we'll hear what old Simmonds has got to say to-morrow. Perhaps something may have turned up since I saw him last.'

Cressida smiled and brightened a little. It was a relief, such as we anticipate and derive from the advent of a doctor, even in cases where it is tolerably clear that he can do no good.

anything, ever? Fan used to wonder why within those grounds the seasons did not come to a standstill, the days cease to lengthen and shorten, the moons to wax and wane. 'It is not always May' is an adage that holds good of every place under heaven. The converse might, should, be equally true, yet Greywell Court stood up to contradict it; for there, at least, it seemed always December.

Norbert's prolonged illness and Fan's departure from the scene had deprived the family circle of the few lively touches that had brightened it now and then. More than ever it offered itself as a theme for humorous comment among the neighbours, who found the Colonel's notorious temper an infinitely suggestive subject for squibs and caricatures and racy anecdotes. The tragic side of this home-life they ignored, which was excusable, so carefully was it hidden from their view. Those women's mouths were sealed. Instinctively they fought shy of pity in this matter, as they might of insults. There was no cupboard-skeleton that could be kept under lock and key. It walked abroad in the light of day in its native grotesque ugliness, and they put a good face on the matter, as if to lead people to think they did not mind skeletons.

The Colonel, accustomed to take every misfortune as a newly-wrought personal wrong, had in this last instance done his utmost to fight off all compunction or sympathetic show of pity. He let his conviction be inferred by his household, and in his usual way—a way that implied that no other conviction should be allowed to survive under the same roof; that his son was entirely to blame for what had befallen him; that he was now suffering the natural consequence,

CHAPTER XVIII.

JEANIE'S ROMANCE.

THE changes and chances of two years had failed to work any perceptible alteration on the manner of life at Greywell. Could

not to say the just penalty, of headstrong folly, inert neglect of common precaution, and selfish disregard of the result to unoffending people—that is to say, his father, on whom the blow had fallen as a final, clenching disappointment. From brooding on this, the Colonel had contrived to pervert the whole force of his regret and solicitude into bitter reprobation, tinged with resentment for the son who, either by strength or by weakness, seemed for ever to be eluding his dominion. Fresh proof to the Colonel, had he needed any, that the whole universe was against him. Fresh cause for him to become, if possible, more difficult to live with, and more indifferent to the gloom he thus spread around him.

Of course, having committed himself to the Draconian line, he had slight patience with the outward manifestations of opposite feeling in his wife. Poor Mrs. Alleyne made up for such self-restraint when he was out of the way, spending the whole of her leisure time in tears. It was want of thought, not heart, that kept her, as far as her husband, from taking Millie and Jeanie into consideration, and reflecting that all this was worse for them than for their parents, since more vital and dangerous consequences may follow a course of melancholy stagnation if taken at five-and-twenty than thirty years later.

Fortunately for Millie, both her imagination and her reasoning powers were slow. The very idea that Norbert should never be himself again was a great deal too strange and tragical for her to entertain it. A miracle of healing would have seemed more likely. Inability to comprehend a trial often helps us through it; and Millie, as before, went on from her Sunday schools to her knit-

ting and her gardening and the narrow round of occupation open to her, and really suffered less from what was breaking Mrs. Alleyne's heart than from the Colonel's petty tyranny, which had lately taken to exercising itself in twenty new and seemingly trifling, but to herself and Jeanie unutterably irksome, ways. He became increasingly particular about their walking beyond the grounds alone, laid a ban on one thing after another, forbade their visiting one family after another—generally families members of whom had—or so he fancied—slighted him directly or indirectly. Ere this he had managed to quarrel with many of the leading people, all of whom hated him roundly, though some tried to bear with him for the sake of his wife and daughters. But the proverbial dulness of that house was such that the neighbours were naturally glad of the faintest pretext for excusing themselves from dining there; and of late years Mrs. Alleyne had nearly abandoned the ungrateful task of periodically getting parties of these unwilling people together.

The girls suffered. Their scanty circle of society became scantier, their glimpses of the world they were to live in fewer and fainter. Their instincts did not drive them, like Fan, to discover a new earth for themselves in books or imagination. Millie and Jeanie were no blues to begin with, and their father had forbidden their joining any of the lecture classes that had lately been set going in Lulington, considering the attendance too mixed and the tendency of the instruction given most exceptionable. The names of the books recommended for the study of the class were enough!

A memorable storm was created by the accidental detection in the

house of a French novel that Lewis Lefroy had lent Jeanie to read. It was a prose idyl of rural life, rather insipid perhaps, but decidedly harmless. Now whether the Colonel believed the language of William the Conqueror to be intrinsically noisome (he had never risked making its intimate acquaintance himself), or whether, more plausibly, he saw in this inoffensive specimen the thin edge of the wedge, the discovery called forth an amount of wrath and displeasure that would have been ludicrous in their disproportion to the occasion, but that for this they were none the less disagreeable. His daughter got a tremendous lecture. The volume was confiscated, and poor Jeanie, half way through, had to think of the hero and heroine for evermore in the seemingly hopeless plight where she had left them. One cause for self-congratulation she had, however: namely, that by good fortune and some obstinacy on her part she had got off without betraying how the volume had come into her hands, preferring to subject herself and her books to any sort of annoying censorship henceforth rather than risk rousing in her father a prejudice against Lewis Lefroy. With the Colonel an outburst of anger, so far from clearing the air, poisoned it. The two, thanks to Lefroy's amiable flexibility making it next to impossible to come to loggerheads with him, had continued always to meet on terms of civility, and the dread of a skirmish between them was now the nightmare of Jeanie's life.

She was only a grown-up child, poor Jeanie, groping on among molehills, but to her they were mountains. During the last few months—she reproached herself for it as for a fault—she had made

more discoveries about happiness than in the whole course of her previous life. It seemed selfish and wicked, with Norbert in this desperately critical state, to feel particularly glad about anything. But she could not help it. The source of this extraordinary brightness of spirit was aloof from family hopes and fears.

Even the recollection of that afternoon when Mr. Marriott's telegram had come and filled every one with dismay, she could not call up without furtive snatches of keen pleasure. Her walk home across the fields *tête-à-tête* with Lewis Lefroy had left an impression not to be effaced by the catastrophe that had succeeded it. Since then more than one opportunity of meeting had occurred, and each occasion had given a pleasanter addition to her stock of memories. And a pending visit to the Marriotts, who had invited her to spend a week with them in London, an act of charity to their country cousins they now conscientiously performed twice or thrice yearly, she looked forward to as the Millennium, simply because Lefroy was in town. He had a studio in London now, and being an acquaintance of her uncle's would be sure to be at the house now and then. Nay, had he not promised to come expressly to see her?

But for this prospect the visit would have appalled her merely. The luxury she felt oppressive, not even dazzling. She had none of Cressida's receptiveness or lively facility for entering into any phase of life that should happen to be presented to her. And as for the pleasures of observation, her powers in that line had had so little practice that, imperfectly developed as they were, she could not profit by them now. Suddenly launched from

Greywell and subdued monotony into brilliant many-sided society, she was chiefly overcome by the sense of her own deficiencies, and appeared shyer and awkward than she really was; seemed to be always tripping up in her dress, upsetting tumblers, bungling forks and wine-glasses, embarking in speeches and having to leave off, or contradicting herself absurdly, without even Millie, a fellow-bungler, for a companion picture to keep her in countenance. The Marriott girls tried to be kind to her, but in a patronising way that Jeanie dimly resented. She did not admire or exactly envy her cousins, and they were not happy in their attempts to coax the shy girl out of her shell. At their large showy dinner-parties she was mournfully sensible that her cavalier, however duteously civil, thought her an incubus, and turned with alacrity to his other fair neighbour, whoever she might be. The Marriotts took her out everywhere and introduced her; but an utter stranger in this wonderland of fashion, how could she naturalise herself there, or expect to meet with anything better than condescension?

Only with Lefroy she brightened up and became a totally different creature. In the first place he, and he alone, was *not* a stranger to her; and in the second, though he had never told her he liked her, she knew it intuitively, and responded in this way, as a little cat knows and comes out to its friends. He was constantly at the house. The banker, unlike his morose and exclusive brother-in-law, owned to a decided predilection for artists great and small, made a point of cultivating their acquaintance, and showed himself a liberal patron. There happened to be a little panelled room in the house, which Lewis Lefroy had lately

been commissioned to decorate, with free leave to follow his own taste. He now came every morning to go on with his fancy work; the young ladies would stand by to watch and admire the progress of the bird of paradise, which after a variety of experiments he had decided on, and on the whole Jeanie occupied his thoughts and attention nearly as much as the panel he was painting for her uncle.

Those were the real holiday hours for Jeanie, far more important and delightful than the whole round of London entertainments: the park, the opera, theatre, balls, miles of pictures. These, and the people who lived off them, belonged to a sphere parted by a great gap from hers.

She had unconsciously the prettiest ways of showing her preference for him, naive, self-forgetful, and peculiarly gratifying to Lefroy's sensitive *amour-propre*. Other women had been fond of him before, and most certainly he had not seen their predilection through diminishing glasses. O, his mind was a very garner of tender memories, and there was nothing in the world more enjoyable to him than the retrospect of these golden, or at least glittering, hours—as it were so many clever little studies, sketches, exercises, impromptus, preludes of a dabbler in the fine art of making love.

For never yet had he so far belied his versatile, volatile self in any one of these *affaires de cœur*, as to risk being saddened or embittered in the faintest degree by the recollection. True to his humming-bird hawk-moth ideal he had fluttered about the honeysuckles, seen, sipped, and flown away.

He was great at private theatricals, and once, unawares, had very nearly been betrayed into almost

a serious passion for a clever and handsome lady amateur. The 'love of a life,' which he believed in of course, but was content to find receding, horizon-like, as fast as he moved on to approach it, threatened to meet him here. Dora Marchmont was a splendid woman, and a striking actress. She played Julie de Fontanges to his Henri de Neuville many a time and admirably on the boards, and something of the sort in real life between the performances. A tall, dark, queen-like woman on a scale twice as large as his own, and married to a nonentity of a husband. Here clearly were all the elements ready for the sensation drama, the crisis of Lefroy's life. *Why* would it not come off?

Men who go through life with the white feather for their trade-mark must forego great effects. One element was wanting to the drama in question. 'All plot and no passion' should have been its title on the stage of life.

They had not quarrelled; they had drifted apart. He owned now that this was quite as well, as it might have been rather disastrous. He had really not felt the estrangement so much as might have been expected, and he could look back on the whole of this period of hopeless tyrannic love with a feeling of unmingled complacency.

Nor had Dora's heart been broken. Perhaps she had gradually surmised about her devotee that latent caution and calculation which are of all qualities the most disenchanting to the female heart. The most susceptible of women are proof in the main against a sort of vamped-up, experimental, decorative attachment, upon which not a particle of the lover's life or prosperity can be said to hinge. Alec de Saumarez could throw himself into the most ephemeral love passage with the same zest

and disregard of immediate consequences as though his eternal salvation were involved, and had won at that lottery over and over again; but Lefroy would have doubted and temporised and looked back though the prize were a diamond, sooner than compromise himself by staking a counter.

It was more than doubtful if he had ever inspired a genuine attachment till he met Jeanie; perhaps he felt this, though of course it would never do to own it, even to himself. Alas, he was neither a hero nor a genius, still less a Lovelace; merely an agreeable, talkative, little five-o'clock-tea fellow, whom women petted and fondled like a terrier or a spoilt child, and did not scruple to treat with as little ceremony. But for Jeanie had Lewis Lefroy been the grandest representative man of his time, or the most irresistible, she could not have liked him better. Nay, not so well; for the distance between them would have been too great, impassable. Even as it was, she had fits of timidity with him now and then. That he, who was everywhere such a favourite with women, should single *her* out for the lion's share of his attention seemed very strange, and such attentions a condescension, though there was never a trace of that in his manner.

This excessive diffidence, which showed itself directly they got beyond the commonplaces of conversation, surprised and amused him. He liked to try and charm it away. The process of drawing her out was like training a little bird, that a voice, a sharp movement, a mere nothing will scare. But Lewis Lefroy was gifted for the task: he could not be brusque; so gentle, soft, and finikin; the shy robin must come to him and eat out of his hand at last.





JEANIE ALLEYNE AND LEWIS LEFROY.

See p. 27.

1. *Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 12228) was grown in tryptic soy broth (TSB) (Difco) supplemented with 0.5% yeast extract (Difco) and 0.5% glucose (Difco) at 37°C. Cells were harvested at mid-log phase (OD₆₀₀ = 0.5) and washed with phosphate buffered saline (PBS) (pH 7.4) containing 0.1% bovine serum albumin (BSA) (Pierce and Warriner, 1990). Cells were then resuspended in PBS containing 0.1% BSA and 0.1% penicillin (100 U/ml), streptomycin (100 µg/ml), and nystatin (40 U/ml) (Pierce and Warriner, 1990).

[illegible]

1. The first step is to identify the problem. In this case, the problem is that the system is not working as expected.

[illegible][illegible][illegible][illegible]

2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 2681, 2682, 26

1. The first step is to identify the key components of the system. This includes understanding the hardware, software, and data involved.

[illegible]

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are under 15 years of age is expected to increase by 1.5 billion, from 1.1 billion in 1990 to 2.6 billion in 2010. The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 1.1 billion, from 0.3 billion in 1990 to 1.4 billion in 2010. The number of people aged 15-64 is expected to increase by 1.5 billion, from 1.1 billion in 1990 to 2.6 billion in 2010. The number of people aged 65 and over is expected to increase by 1.1 billion, from 0.3 billion in 1990 to 1.4 billion in 2010. The number of people aged 15-64 is expected to increase by 1.5 billion, from 1.1 billion in 1990 to 2.6 billion in 2010.

On the other hand, Y. P. Kozlovskii, who has been studying the problem of the origin of the *Chelonic* group for a long time, has shown that the *Chelonic* group is not a monophyletic group, but a polyphyletic group. He has shown that the *Chelonic* group is composed of several distinct groups, each of which has its own origin. He has shown that the *Chelonic* group is not a monophyletic group, but a polyphyletic group. He has shown that the *Chelonic* group is composed of several distinct groups, each of which has its own origin.

1. *Chlorophyll a* and *Chlorophyll b* were determined by the method of Arar and Collins (1971).

1. *Phragmites australis* (Cav.) Trin. ex Steud.

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

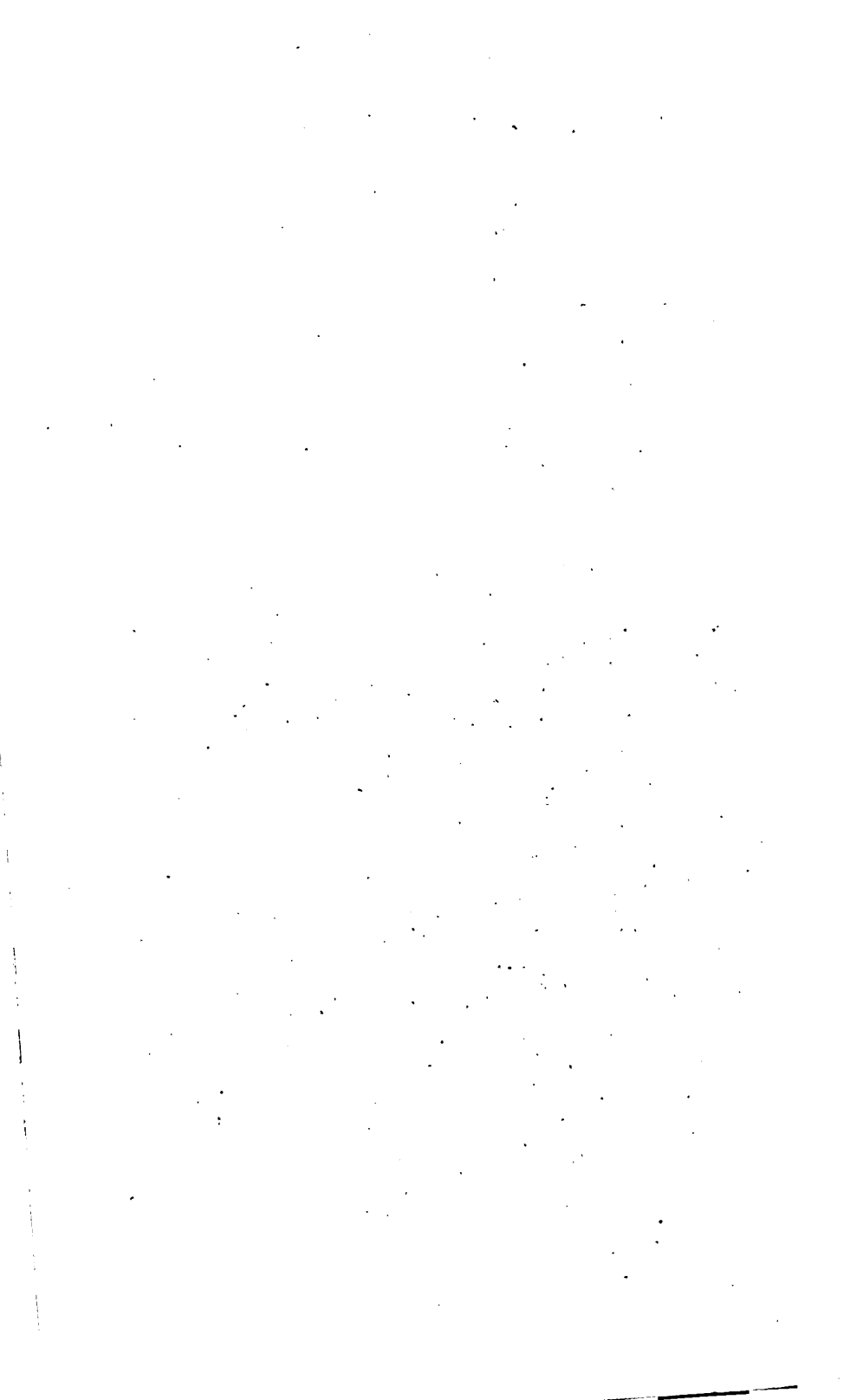
For the purpose of this study, the following hypotheses were formulated:

[illegible][illegible][illegible]

Relevance: The results of this study are relevant to the field of research on the effects of social support on health outcomes.

25.1	100	100	100
25.2	100	100	100
25.3	100	100	100
25.4	100	100	100

[illegible][illegible]



Jeanie's visit was drawing to a close. On her last evening but one the Marriotts had one of their grand receptions. The banker was in his glory;—never had he had the satisfaction of seeing so many magnates of various descriptions gathered under his roof—his wife and daughters likewise, complacently receiving the polite attentions of heiress-hunters. But by far the happiest person in the room was Jeanie. The Babel of tongues, lavish display of millinery, and multitude of strange faces only dazed her and made her head ache. She was apt to slink aside into a quiet corner near the curtains, where she would pretend to be deep in a volume of Doré's illustrations to *Don Quixote*. But there would come a moment when her heart would begin to flutter in a distracting manner, so that she could hardly tell windmills and giants apart, or the knight from his squire on the pages under her eyes.

Would Lewis Lefroy come and take the seat beside her? Would he not! Philistinish London society *en masse* bored him as much as it did her, and piqued him withal. He felt himself of such little account there.

'I really shouldn't like to live in London,' he remarked to her that night, when the press, the heat, the noise, and ceaseless come and go began to grow more extreme and bewildering than usual on such occasions.

'Where would you like best to live, then?' she ventured shyly.

'Well, I've several ideals,' he replied, 'and cannot make up my mind between them. For instance, a friend of mine has a cottage somewhere down in Cornwall, which he has done up and decorated himself. Sometimes I've thought that is what I should prefer—a cottage, of which every nook and square inch should be in

character. You couldn't carry that out with a large place, you know. But in a doll's house like that one can make every detail perfect.'

Jeanie agreed; but suggested that such an abode might be rather cramped and dreary in winter or bad weather, and dark for painting in, perhaps.

'So it might,' he admitted, considering. 'I think I should like best of all to settle abroad—in Paris; or else in some delightful place in Italy, where there would be sun all the year round and no fogs.'

'Delightful,' she sighed; 'and yet I think that I—supposing it was myself, I mean—could not bear to be always so far from home and people I knew.'

'Yes, you're quite right,' he said mournfully; adding, after a few moments' reflection, 'But for that there is nothing to equal a kind of half-suburban place, such as I'm trying now. One is out of the whirl, and yet within reach of everything and everybody. By the bye, when are you coming to pay my studio the visit you promised?'

'The Marriotts talked of taking me to-morrow,' she replied, smiling; 'I go back the day after.'

'O, then I shall count upon seeing you to-morrow,' he said; 'it's an engagement; I shall remind Miss Marriott before I leave.'

He did mention it as he was saying good-night, and the sisters kindly undertook not to forget the item in their afternoon drive. As Lefroy went home he began running over his three home-ideals in his head again, and remarking that this evening every one had suggested itself with the addition of Jeanie as his companion; so that in talking them over with her he had been on the point of inadvertently letting this out by saying 'we' and 'us' more than once.

Lately some new reflections about himself, without moving him very deeply, had begun to occupy him a good deal.

His butterfly bachelor life he granted (sorrowfully, for no other could ever be half so dear to him) could not last to the end of time. Although he might still pass in appearance for three or four-and-twenty, he would be thirty-one next birthday, and was uncomfortably aware that there is no more pitiable and laughable object than a butterfly obviously getting on in life. Better and wiser far to doff the gay livery of mirth gracefully, before it is quite worn out and conspicuously tarnished.

Lefroy was prudence and precaution personified. He was discriminating too, and had felt from the first that to trifle with Jeanie Alleyne as he was in the habit of trifling with women of the world, to perplex her with tender attentions and compliments, such as he had lavished on Mrs. Marchmont, would be quite unpardonable. If during this past week he had sought the society pointedly and let drop some phrases she might well interpret into a meaning very sweet to her, it was because he was drifting, and submissively, towards the goal at last.

Jeanie would make him a dear, faithful, little wife, admire him infinitely, and her flattery, however extravagant, would always be sincere, and therefore pleasant to him to receive. As to the goods of this world, it was probable she would bring him very little; but love of money was not among Lefroy's weak points. Never had he even thought of paying court to one of the Marriott girls. Not that he held romantic ideas on the subject of marriage, or regarded it as an all-important part of a man's life that must vitally affect his welfare one way or the other.

After all, what is vital, thought he, when you come to analyse and philosophise? Still he would not have married on less than a mild preference, such as he felt for Jeanie. As to heiresses, he had never seen one that he liked at all; which was lucky, he granted; as to the hand of what heiress could he, with his very modest competence, reasonably aspire? But the kind of clover he wanted to live in can be had for five hundred a year, which doubtless he and Jeanie could make up between them. Life partnership with one of the banker's daughters would have laid burdens on him intolerable to such a man. He would have felt crushed, nay, extinguished, beneath a triple mountain of other people's gold, social fetters, and an unexceptionable but dull and heavy wife, to whom he would, nevertheless, have to consider himself as under obligations unspeakable for having brought him much wealth. Not for Lewis Lefroy! If there was one good thing he honestly held dear it was individual freedom. In choosing to marry Jeanie rather than another he acted up to this principle. Whether in the cottage at the Land's End, or under the Italian *pergola*, or in the villa at Maida Hill, theirs might be a model existence, cut to his own favourite pattern; a machine of which every wheel and crank should go smoothly and admirably. If it only could have been done without making up his mind! He disliked having to make up his mind.

The Miss Marriotts were as good as their word, and brought Jeanie with them to call the next day. It was Lefroy's 'at home' afternoon, and his bijou studio was crowded with miscellaneous visitors. There was hardly room left in it for the Miss Marriotts and their trains. Jeanie became

the place better. She was small, like the owner, and did not encroach on the china and *bric-à-brac*, or brush down easels with her skirts like her cousins. Neither, like them, did she look down stiffly and frigidly on the 'mixed' assembly of shaggy fellow-artists, Jew dealers, and patrons from the provinces. The master of the ceremonies brought them all thimblefuls of tea in a miniature set, invisible biscuits on a fairy plate. Jeanie thought Lewis Lefroy's 'at home' glorious fun. It was the single London outing she had thoroughly enjoyed. The Miss Marriotts kindly stayed till the end, and thawed somewhat when the 'miscellanies' had dispersed. The conversation turned on books, and Jeanie related the grievous fate of the French novel Lefroy had lent her, and there was much laughter over the story of its sequestration. He persisted that she must accept something else, as an atonement for the mischief he had innocently made; and it ended in her taking away with her a prettily bound copy of *Undine*, illustrated by himself, and to which, as he neatly observed, being in English and in fairyland, nobody could possibly object.

When at last the Marriotts said they must go, Jeanie departed with them, all smiles. True, she was going home to-morrow, but Lullington was no such terrible distance from London. Lewis Lefroy had found his way down into that neighbourhood before, might do so again soon, nay, had hinted an intention to that effect.

Left alone in his little kingdom, Lefroy could have begun to dance, as a let-off to the effervescence of his spirits. This subsiding, a slight reaction ensued.

Half comically, half regretfully, he shook his head over himself as he contemplated that approaching

change which he had almost decided was inevitable. Benedick, the married man! Lewis Lefroy, the pink of graceful flutterers, about to settle down into calm, prosaic, uniform, domestic life with a little country girl! Well, if it must be so, it must.

But he feels also he will never take the final measure without a look back, maybe a relapse or two. What matter, if the end is decreed?

At this moment his eye fell upon his album, his *Century of Fair Women*. He took it up quickly and turned over the pages, recalling affectionately, one by one, all those 'might have beens' he had been so very careful not to make anything else. He was tempted to go through them, not as an antidote, but as a set-off to his present exemplary state of mind.

At last he chanced on a page with a rough sketch that he had allowed to remain, though unfinished; the only imperfect thing in the book. It caught his eye and riveted him awhile.

'Mrs. Kennedy: ah, *she* was a pretty woman! Barberine!' he sighed gently; 'and her portrait that I've never taken, never shall take now, I suppose. Dear, dear, what a long, long way off all that time seems!'

He was still looking into the shadowy face, recalling how each time they had met it had possessed him, something there inviting him to pursuit like a Fata Morgana, and how it had always eluded him.

'That reminds me,' he ejaculated, suddenly starting up, 'that this is Tuesday, and that I've never once been to Curzon-street.'

For a moment his expression was tragic, horror-struck. Lefroy was intensely punctilious in some matters of etiquette, dreaded being found wanting in doing 'the right thing.' At the beginning of the year he had received from

Mrs. de Saumarez a friendly general invitation for her Tuesday-evening receptions. He had thought it too kind of her, promised to come, with spontaneous effusion, as though it were the most valued pleasure of his life; and (the little humbug!) he had not shown himself on a single occasion. Either he had forgotten, or had something else to do, or somebody had carried him off elsewhere and prevented him.

He had not seen her for months, nor heard news of her or hers, excepting some gossip about Alec's having, not long since, come in rather unexpectedly for some considerable property, one result of which, it was said, had been that certain watchful mothers, who had long given him up and shaken their heads over him as 'not a marrying man,' were beginning to cast their eyes upon him again as an eligible son-in-law.

Lefroy decided that he must go there to-night and make his peace. He was very clever at making his peace with people in this way, having studied and practised the art of conciliation.

Elise in such cases was not an implacable person at all. Lefroy found a gay party assembled, and took great pains to make himself useful and agreeable. The hostess rewarded him, later on, by introducing him to a young lady, who seemed to be queening it sedately over all the other fair women present—Lady Mary Carroll, a friend and godchild of Mrs. de Saumarez, and who came to stay with her occasionally. To Lefroy was given the honour of taking this fair remnant of England's aristocracy in to supper. She was an acknowledged beauty, very simple, very haughty, and difficult to get on with, he decided. He knew not awkwardness or timidity, but it made him sad not

to feel appreciated, and his distant admiration for Lady Mary was of the kind a cricket might entertain for a race-horse. How differently he had felt with Jeanie Alleyne! However, he exerted himself to fulfil his charge scrupulously, was very attentive to everybody, and when the company dispersed he ventured to linger a few moments behind the rest, just to feel that he was forgiven by the mistress of the house.

'If you had come a little earlier,' said Elise, 'you would have met an old friend who appeared here quite unexpectedly to-day. Joe Kennedy, of all people in the world.'

'Indeed!' said Lefroy, interested.

'Alec brought him; they have both been dining with us.'

'Mr. de Saumarez is in town, then?'

'He is in town for the present,' said Elise. Lefroy's acuteness detected a significance in her tone. 'What's in the wind?' he thought; and happening to glance at Lady Mary opposite, he caught, or fancied he caught, a very slight change of countenance. 'O—ho! that's in the wind, is it?' he concluded to himself.

'You have heard of his wind-fall, I daresay,' Elise continued; 'an uncle we all believed to be immortal, and who, believing himself so, never made a will, but died quite suddenly, and Alec has stumbled into his inheritance.'

'Yes,' said Lefroy; 'but I have not seen him since, or had the opportunity of congratulating him.' He was thinking vaguely that perhaps blessings, as well as misfortunes, never comes singly: was De Saumarez going to crown his prosperity by a rich marriage? From Elise's expression he felt sure her thoughts were running over the same ground. But the conversation turned upon other subjects: the Kennedys, their losses, Monks'

Orchard, the farm, where, said Elise, they were settling down into pastoral life.

Lefroy left reassured that he was in favour with his patroness again ; but it had been an exciting day, and his brain was in a whirl. Cressida, Jeanie, Lady Mary seemed to be chasing each other like the figures on a top. He felt the pillars of his resolution a little shaken already ; luckily there was no call for action of any sort, and by the morning he would, he supposed, be of a practical mind again.

That had been a depressing day at the farm. Small, fine wetting rain descending in sheets, precluding the thought of going out, or the dream of visitors. Cressida had an over-abundance of solitude and leisure to meditate on their prospects. Draw, paint, play, read, or work though she might, the same picture always before her. She resolved to face things as they actually were, and not gild them any longer.

The question was not how well she could like Trianon provisionally, but how she could bear perpetual banishment from Versailles ; quite another thing. So tantalising, too, to be living thus within sight of the goal. Joe did not mind. He would, she felt, be well content to go plodding on as now, for a dozen years or more perhaps, ever hoping that the next turn would make a change, but happily resigned to working and waiting, and doing without what they have not got. Come it must at last. Yes, thinks Cressida, when her hair is turning gray, and her gay spirits have been lived down, her social gifts worn or rusted out, then she and Joe would be free to lift up their heads in the world as important people. But it was hard to smile and say Amen to that.

The existence she had planned and longed for at Monks' Orchard was by no means a wholly vain and selfish one. She would be queen, of course, and she would also gratify her artistic tastes, but she meant to be a good fairy too, to her friends and neighbours. Among the pleasures she longed to appropriate, those of generosity held a front place. How sweet to be able to scatter manna among hungry souls—give here the opening to genius struggling with poverty, here to bring a little light into dark prospects, social pleasures to girls, scanted like the Alleynes in the recreation of their lives ! Nay, she might raise the standard and tone of society in the neighbourhood generally. Rich and poor should rise up and call her blessed ; and blessed she would be in the sense most precious to her of wide-spreading influence and supremacy, so assured that she would no longer be tempted to be perpetually proving it to herself by petty experiments.

Ever removed. The old story. Doomed to fall short of her dreams of perfect love and perfect life. The first she had to relinquish long ago. The other must go now.

She saw it plainly since her husband had become so downcast this last week. His sanguine disposition would colour fading hopes up to the very last. She might conclude things were even worse than he would allow. It will make him wretched in earnest if she lets him see how miserable she feels about it. Yet it will try her sorely to keep all this to herself, and put a sweet face on the worst news he could bring.

Restlessly she waited for his return. At last she heard him come tramping up to the porch. She foolishly hung back from going to the door to meet him, for fear of seeing the dreaded truth

written in his honest countenance. The next minute he marched straight into the sitting-room. Scorning 'lifts' on wheels, he had come from the station on foot by preference, through rain and sludge, and walked in now, having forgotten to scrape his boots or take off his greatcoat.

'Well!' he began, in a ringing tone, full of glee, as he thought of how he was going to chase away his wife's disconsolate face.

'Dear Joe, how wet you are!' she exclaimed, shrinking back a little from his conjugal salute, 'Please—' the drops from his coat were falling in a shower over her pretty dress and the new carpet.

'So I am!' he muttered, surprised, looking at himself. 'It is rather moist outside. The fact is, I was in such a hurry to tell you my news, that I clean forgot everything else. I hope I haven't spoilt that scrumptious gown of yours!'

'The carpet,' she suggested magnanimously.

'I'm afraid I have brought in a lot of mud,' he said ruefully. 'But never mind; there's not much damage done.' He pulled off his coat, thereby making another shower, flung it over the back of the nearest chair, and threw himself down by her on the sofa. 'Good news, Cressida!'

'Tell me, tell me!' she said eagerly, but checked with doubt. How far was there ground for this boyish confidence?

'Guess!'

'Simmonds has found some one who wants to lend you the money?' she said timidly.

Joe shook his head, and laughed to see her look of discomfiture.

'Better than that.'

'Well, *what?*' she asked, with a tiny stamp of impatience.

'Found him myself,' said Joe.

'What do you say to that?'

'No? Have you? her eyes

gleaming brightly as she smiled.

'All—and on the terms you want?'

'Ay, all; just as I wanted. And now, Cressida, if I have a run of luck, another year might find us at Monks' Orchard.'

'A year?'

'Yes,' said Joe convincingly; 'and in the ordinary course of things two or three, at most, ought to do it. The world will see us with our heads above water again. I knew it would all come right. But to think I should have turned up a friend in need in him of all the fellows I ever knew.'

'In whom?' she asked.

'Ah, to be sure, I haven't told you yet. His not being a stranger made it easier to get him to enter into my schemes. Now for my story.'

Cressida listened.

'I went first to old Simmonds, who did nothing but shake his head and croak, recommending the place taken off my hands altogether. I was at my wits' end. Then I went to have lunch at the club, and the first person I met there was Alec de Saumarez.'

'Alec de Saumarez?' Completely taken aback and forgetting herself for an instant, she exclaimed impulsively, 'Joe, dear Joe, tell me: it is not he, surely not he, who is going to do this for you?'

'Patience,' said Joe, laughing; but momentarily struck by the force in her look and tone, he asked in surprise, 'why do you seem so taken aback, so dumb-founded?'

'Because,' said Cressida, rallying quickly, 'from all I know of him I should think he was more likely to have to come to a friend to borrow thousands than to lend them, have them to lend, I mean.'

'Right you are,' returned Joe, 'as I'll tell you presently. He was always open with his purse, but there was generally not much

left in it. The best of the story is this—that it appears that the young scamp came into a lot of money the other day, so lately, in fact, that he hasn't had time to run through it yet. We got talking. He told me about his slice of luck; then I said something about our difficulties, and the nice mess poor Tom has got us in. Whilst I was yarning, the idea occurred to me to sound him as to whether he would be inclined towards a speculation of the sort, you know. He knows nothing about farming himself, but I'd no scruple to put the matter before him. It's a safer investment than he'd pitch upon if he were left to himself, and he can make what inquiries he likes. But he seems rather inclined to go in for it, came down to meet the proposal half-way most handsomely, and I don't suppose any difficulties are likely to crop up. I know the secret of it, I think.'

'What do you mean?'

'Well, I did *him* a sort of a good turn once,' Joe confessed awkwardly. 'I'd forgotten it myself, but perhaps he hasn't, and I suspect he's more than ordinary glad of the chance of obliging me and paying off the score. It was when we were both youngsters of three-and-twenty. He had got himself into the very devil of a scrape. I knew the circumstances. He had been a fool, and wanted some three or four hundred pounds he couldn't get, to save him from exposure, which would have been smash. It wasn't altogether his fault, if I recollect. At all events, I lent him what he wanted to hold up his head. It was a mere song to what he does for me now. But I was hard up myself at the time, and he was more in need of that money than I am of this. But I fancy he remembers that, too, and like a gentleman wants to square accounts.'

VOL. XXXIV. NO. OXCIX.

'Is it all decided then?' asked Cressida timidly. If it were, *she* at least would have had no hand in the arrangement.

'No, not yet,' said Joe; 'he's always ready to commit himself, but I wouldn't hurry him into an agreement of the sort. He may think better of it perhaps. He and his lawyer can go and lay their heads together if they please, and make up their minds for or against. But, to tell you the truth, it was all so sudden that I wanted to turn it over in my own head, talk to you about it, and hear what you thought.'

For once Cressida, in a remote corner of her heart, wished Joe had left her out of the question, and acted, without consulting her, on the spur of the moment.

'I couldn't do better, Cressida, could I?'

Cressida was silent.

'The queer thing is that it should have dropped into my mouth like this just in the nick of time,' said Joe reflectively. 'I can't hardly believe it. We might get fifty offers, they wouldn't be worth this one. He'd be content to wait for his return if necessary, which would leave me free to lay out more than I should dare otherwise. What say you?'

'Shall we talk about it to-morrow?' she said evasively. 'I don't feel as if I had any head to think with to-night.'

'All right,' said Joe; 'I'm dead sleepy myself, and might come to grief in the midst of my reasoning. But so much I'm certain of, that it's a tremendous piece of luck. And Master Alec isn't a bad fellow, I declare; a little soft, and a harum-scarum young rascal. But I fancy he's sown his wild oats, and the next thing we shall hear of him is that he's going to marry and settle down. High time he began to think about it.'

D

THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MONSTERS OF THE DEEP.

THE ant reflected a little, and then observed,

'There is one way of escape—not an easy one, it is true; but you are very strong, and between us I think we shall succeed in surmounting all difficulties. This is what I propose doing: our raft is too large to pass between the bulrushes; we must cut it down a little.'

'Do you really mean it?'

'Of course I do.'

'And how do you mean to set about it?'

'You must follow my instructions.'

'I am ready. Proceed.'

'Then first cut that stalk there, and then there.'

As she spoke she pointed to the bulrush she had thrown down, and which now lay across our leaf, indicating the exact points at which the divisions were to be made.

I set to work. The first operation did not take long. It was only the outside of the stalk which was hard, as the inside consisted merely of a soft pith which offered very little resistance. I had soon cut off a piece of the length of the lily leaf.

'Now,' said the ant, 'draw towards you the part of the bulrush which is still floating, and cut off a second piece of the same length as the first.'

I did as I was bid.

The two pieces of bulrush now lay on our leaf. The ant made me place them alongside of each other.

'So far, so good,' she said. 'Now

go and take hold of the leaf by the edge, draw it towards you as you did yesterday evening when you wanted shelter, and fold it over the two stalks. You will then cut off all which projects beyond them.'

I began to see what she was aiming at, and after a good deal of pretty hard work I succeeded in folding one piece of the leaf over what was to form the framework of our raft. I then, as ordered, cut off all which projected beyond it and threw it into the water.

'Very good. Now do the same on the other side.'

I was already at work again; but this second task was more difficult of accomplishment than the first had been, because I could not now go on to the other side of the stalks, and it was necessary to cut off the surplus part of the leaf before folding the remainder over the bulrush. I succeeded at last after an hour of intense exertion, and we found ourselves in possession of a long narrow raft as stable as we could wish and perfectly competent to carry us.

We had now to get it to the outer boundary of the belt of bulrushes, and to do so it was still necessary to cross a short space covered with floating rubbish. This, however, presented no serious difficulty. The ant again ventured on to the loose sticks, and picking out a bit of stubble which bent over the raft, she made an incision in its stalk which sent it toppling down. I put it to the same use as I had the bulrush, and soon

one end of our bark was between the stalks of the aquatic plants, beyond which we hoped to disembark.

Very extraordinary and altogether new to me was the appearance of the kind of forest into which we were now entering. The smooth dark-green stalks of the bulrushes, which were as thick as my body, rose abruptly

from the water and attained a considerable height. They were sufficiently wide apart for our raft, now so much reduced in size, to pass between them. As already stated, the water about their roots was clear and almost entirely free from the covering of rubbish that we had left behind us, so that very little force was needed to get our boat along. Now and then the



head of the raft came into collision with a bulrush; but the efforts, feeble as they were, of the ant, who stood in the bow, sufficed to turn us aside from any such temporary obstacle and get us back into the right channel. We were soon floating in more open waters.

Presently, on the leaf of a water-plantain, which we were approaching, I noticed something which puzzled me greatly. It looked like a huge creature clinging to the leaf, though it was evidently only the remains of some such creature. It was a dry skin of a whitish colour, with a long slit down the back.

'That,' said the ant, when I pointed it out to her, 'is the skin of a dragon-fly's larva. As I have

told you, the larvæ of dragon-flies frequent the banks of ponds, so we are pretty sure to see some soon. When a larva has attained its full size it leaves the water by climbing up some aquatic plant, and then, clinging to a leaf or stem with its feet, it remains motionless awaiting its metamorphosis. Very soon its skin dries and splits down the back to admit of the exit of the perfect dragon-fly, which gradually unfolds its feeble crumpled wings and finally flies away, leaving its empty husk in the position of the one you see.'

'What a very strange history !

'O, I have long been familiar with these curious remains. One day, when I was busily employed

with some of my companions in carrying a stick, we saw one of our own people in the distance dragging along a fantastic-looking monster some twenty or thirty times as big as herself. You can imagine our astonishment. We hastened to her assistance, and when we got close to her we discovered that what we had taken for an animal was nothing but the dry and of course quite light skin of a dragon-fly's larva, which had been carried by the wind from the banks of the water and dropped close to our home. I need scarcely add that we returned to our work at once, as there was really no need for any one to help our sister to drag her burden to its destination.'

Whilst she was talking the ant neglected to guide our raft, and the consequence was that we became entangled amongst the erect stems of a cluster of bladderwort, the graceful yellow flowers of which, supported on long footstalks, rose above the surface of the water, whilst their stalks and leaves floated beneath it by the help of a vast number of minute bladders filled with air. I ran to the bow of the boat, and by repeated blows with my oar I easily succeeded in getting it free from among the floating plants.

Whilst bending forwards when thus employed I noticed at a little distance from the bottom of the water what looked like a huge stationary air-bubble, which, for some reason unexplained, could not rise to the surface.

I called the ant, and pointing to the object, asked her if it were not a precious stone. She looked at it for some time without speaking, and then begged me to touch it with the end of the piece of stubble. I did so, and immediately a number of little globules of air rose from the seeming stone,

and burst as they reached the surface of the water.

'Ha, ha!' cried the ant; 'I know what it is—it's a spider's house.'

'A spider's!' I exclaimed. 'Impossible!'

'It is, though—the web of a spider of the *argyroneta* species. I have never seen one, but I have heard of them.'

'I thought all spiders lived on land and breathed air, as we do.'

'This one is an exception, at least so far as the medium in which she lives is concerned. She breathes as we do, and lives in air, though under water.'

'Explain yourself.'

'This is how she goes to work: she spins silk as other spiders do, and when she wants to make her water-web she begins by throwing a few threads from branch to branch of some submerged plant. She then unites these first threads with a vast number of others, so arranging them as to form a kind of bell-flower turned upside down. You know what bell-flowers are, cricket?'

'O, yes; they are pretty blue flowers, common in meadows. I have often seen them.'

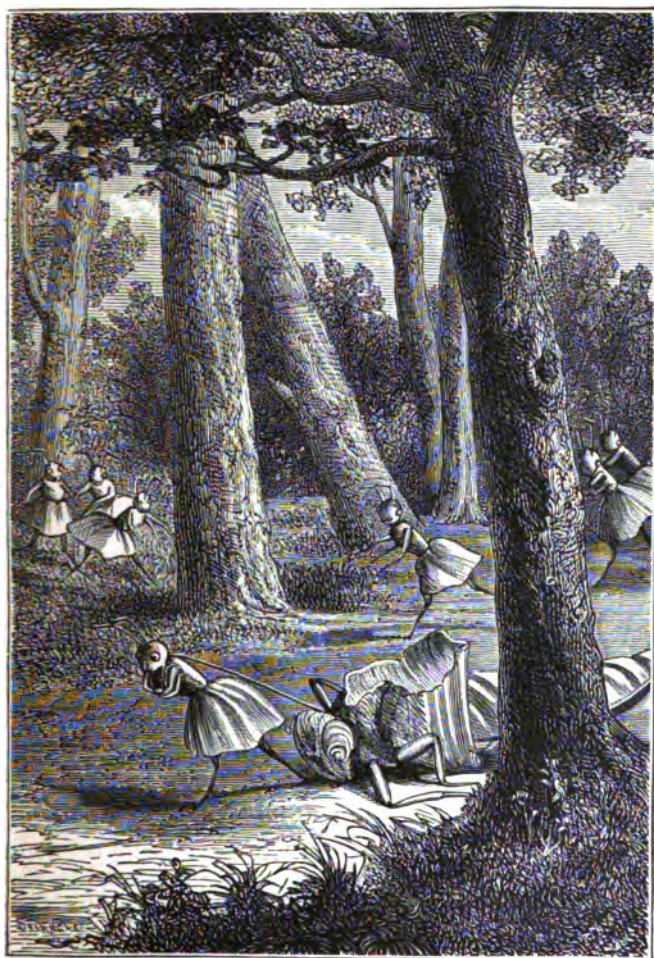
'Well, the *argyroneta* makes a silken bell-flower of a close and mysterious texture. I need scarcely add that whilst she is thus employed she holds her breath, which she seems to be able to do for a considerable time without inconvenience. Her little structure completed, she goes up to fetch an air-bubble, which she brings down and places in her bell-flower. She repeats this operation again and again till her dome is completely filled. She then installs herself in it; and now you know how she manages to live on and in the air stored up by herself.'

'I knew before that spiders are

clever,' I observed; 'but I had no idea they were so skilful as all that. And why does the argyro-neta take all this trouble to make her web in the water instead of living as other spiders do?'

'O, it's just a matter of taste. Perhaps she prefers water larvæ to any other diet.'

'Doesn't she get wet in her trips from her web to the surface of the water?'



'No; her body is completely covered with a close down, through which the water cannot penetrate to her skin.'

During this conversation our bark continued its course to the bank.

The part of the pond we were now crossing was peopled by nu-

merous inhabitants. Great numbers of gyryni or whirligig beetles gambolled about, swimming very rapidly, and describing as they did so some hundreds of interlocked circles. At our approach they sped away, to form into a fresh group a little distance off. Hydrometræ or water-measurers skimmed

the surface of the water as rapidly as, if it were frozen hard, and it amused me to watch their jerking progress, vying in swiftness with the corixæ and notonectæ, which, turned over on their backs, darted along with equal speed.

I did not know all these insects or their habits, never having frequented the banks of ponds; but the ant named them all as they passed us.

'They are all ruffians,' she said, 'who live by prey. Look beneath us now.'

The water gradually decreased in depth as we advanced, and the muddy bottom of the pond could be distinctly seen.

It too was alive with a whole world of swimming and crawling creatures. The ant pointed out to me the larva of a dragon-fly, which was bearing down upon a smaller larva, probably with the intention of devouring it. When it was within reach of its victim it suddenly darted out a kind of jointed arm provided with strong pincers, which, when at rest, it keeps folded over the lower part of its head. With this arm it firmly clutched its prey, I was able to examine its proceedings at my leisure, and I was much struck with the rapidity with which it used this arm, which flashed out as if let loose by a trigger. The dragon-fly larva was certainly armed with a very formidable weapon, and I saw that the ant had been guilty of no exaggeration in what she had told me.

At the bottom we could see nepeæ or water-scorpions amongst a number of small brownish-looking objects which I at first took for bits of stick, but which I guessed on closer examination to be something quite different. I pointed them out to the ant.

'They are not sticks,' she said,

'but the larvæ of phryganeæ or caddis-flies, which live, as you may perceive, in very bad company, and would soon be devoured if they did not take the precaution of forming for themselves a kind of case which completely covers them. They only permit their heads and the leg-bearing segments of their bodies to be seen, and they draw them in on the slightest alarm. They are sensible creatures, I can tell you.'

'What do they live on?'

'A little of everything.'

'Do they spend their whole lives in the water?'

'O dear, no. When they have attained their full size—that is to say, when they find they have left off growing—they fasten their case to some plant, and pass through much such a metamorphosis as dragon-fly larvæ. Look, there is one flying.'

'What is that monster? I asked, at the sudden apparition close to our raft of an enormous black worm with a wrinkled skin, and a head which, instead of being convex at the top as all ours are, was concave, a peculiarity giving him a very strange and ugly appearance.

'It is the larva of a hydrôus or black water-beetle. There, look at it seizing that inoffensive mollusc and crushing it between its jaws.'

'Yes, yes; but it is going to be attacked in its turn. I see a huge dytiscus larva stealthily approaching with some sinister design. It is opening its mandibles and about to strike. Ah!'

This exclamation burst from me in my surprise, when just as I expected to witness a struggle between the dytiscus larva and that of the hydrôus, the latter suddenly disappeared in a kind of black cloud, which completely covered him.

'Well foiled!' cried the ant laughing. 'Did you ever see a more original style of evading your enemies? What the hydrus emitted does not seem to have been to the taste of the dytiscus, for he is decamping in double-quick time.'

'Does this queer fellow—I mean the hydrus—ever get any wings?'

'Of course he does, only he does

not spread them out as caddis-flies and dragon-flies do, but keeps them folded beneath his elytra or wing-cases; for he is of the coleoptera family. He does not have to change his place of residence either; for he continues to live chiefly in the water like the dytiscus, which he resembles, though he is larger and more peaceably inclined.'

'Do you mean to say that in



his perfect state he no longer lives by prey?

'Yes, I do; he browses quietly on vegetables.'

'And the dytiscus?'

'O, he always retains his fierce nature.'

'These changes in character are very surprising.'

'Shall I tell you something which will surprise you still more?'

I looked inquiringly at the speaker.

'You see that worm crawling at the bottom of the water?'

'Yes; what of it?'

'Presently it too will have wings, but when it has it will never eat again.'

'Why not?'

'Because it will no longer have a mouth.'

'You are making fun of me!'

'I am doing no such thing.'

'He can't live long like that.'

'A single day. He is called the ephemera, or May-fly. His larva, however, lives much longer—two years at least.'

'If I were an ephemera larva.

I should be in no hurry for my metamorphosis.'

'O, there are always compensations.'

At this juncture our raft was suddenly struck by a huge beetle, which was rapidly cleaving the water, using as paddles his two hind legs, which were of great length and fringed with hairs.

'Clumsy fellow!' cried the ant, who had been flung down by the shock.

'What ever was it?'

'A dytiscus, bother—a ruffian of the worst class; quite capable of running against us on purpose, in the hope of making us fall into the water.'

'Well, he has made off now, at all events.'

We now remained silent for some minutes, whilst I looked down upon the restless eager world beneath us, of which I had known nothing until my companion revealed to me its wonders.

'One thing surprises me, ant,' I observed presently.

'And what might that be?'

'That you are so intimately ac-

quainted with all these creatures. One would think you had lived amongst them.'

'The reason is not far to seek. In the summer we wander about, keep our eyes open, and hear all sorts of things. Then when the winter comes we talk, which is as good a way as any of passing the time.'

'A way combining instruction with amusement.'

'And you—what do you do in the dull season?'

'O,' I replied, feeling a little embarrassed, 'I sleep.'

'More pleasant than instructive, I should think. No offence, but that accounts for your being stronger in body than in mind. However,' she added, laughing, 'thanks to our meeting, we have both got well out of an awkward scrape. I have thought for you, and you have worked for me. But here we are.'

She was right. Our raft, once free of the bladderwort, drifted easily before the wind, and now came to a standstill amongst the grass on the banks of the pond.

CHAPTER XIV.

SOME SENSIBLE ADVICE.

'CATCH hold of my tail,' I said to the ant, 'and I will help you to disembark.'

She did as I suggested, and taking a spring, I gained the land at a single bound.

The spot at which we alighted was not far from the main road, and to reach it we had to climb a grassy bank. The grass had been recently mown, but, short as it was, it presented quite a formidable obstacle to the progress of the ant.

I therefore told her to seat herself on my back, and hold on firmly. This she readily consented

to do; and one carrying the other we soon, and without any incident worthy of note, reached the wide path down which we had both been swept by the water the day before.

It was just here that I had taken refuge amongst the strawberry-plants when I had been frightened off the road by the noise of an approaching carriage. I took it into my head that I should like to see the place where I had been received by the mole-cricket, and had had my pleasant little chat with the grasshopper.

I mentioned my wish to the ant, and she said she would go with me. As we crossed the road, I also acquainted her with all the incidents of the first evening of my wandering life, dwelling specially on my meeting with the mole cricket.

I was soon beneath the strawberry-plant which had protected the entrance to my cousin's home.

Had that entrance been destroyed in the storm? No; a moment's search, and I had the pleasure of finding it still intact.

'Wait for me here,' I said to the ant; 'I will just run in and ask my cousin how she is—at least, if I find her at home, which is doubtful.'

'I'll come with you, cricket; I shall be very glad to make the



acquaintance of your worthy relative.'

We entered the passage. All went well at first, but it soon became so dark that I had to grope my way.

I knew that the passage led straight into the room in which the mole cricket was generally to be found, and into that room alone. There was therefore no fear of our losing our way in the dark subterranean passage. I stopped, however, for a sudden fear crossed my mind. It will be remembered that I had rushed out of the room for which I was now making when the mole cricket raised the alarm of the mole's approach, and that in my hurry I had not stopped to ascertain whe-

ther that alarm had been true or false. Perhaps my cousin, compelled as she was to be always on the alert against an ever-present danger, fancied she saw moles everywhere, and had cried out in her sleep. If, on the other hand, the mole had really broken into her house, everything would most certainly have been turned upside down by his visit; and in thus venturing myself in the darkness, I ran a risk of tumbling into some hole, from which it might be very difficult to escape. These reflections brought me to a standstill, and I began to shout at the top of my voice; but there was no answer; the most profound silence reigned on every side.

'Come,' said the ant, 'the place

is completely deserted; your cousin is elsewhere, or she has been eaten up. Anyhow, there is nothing for us to do here.'

'Wait a minute,' I replied; 'I think I make out something.'

'If you do, you are sharper than I am, for I can't see the tips of my own antennæ.'

'I see a glimmer of light.'

'O, you've struck your eye against a stone,' was the laughing rejoinder.

'No such thing; look yourself down there at the bottom of the passage.'

'Ah, perhaps you are right, after all.'

'What can it be?'

'Probably only a glowworm. What else do you suppose it could be?'

'Suppose it were she?'

'She?'

'I mean, if it were him?'

'And who might "him" be?'

'My old companion. You know whom I mean—the glowworm I was telling you about just now.'

'Very possibly. Are you much set on seeing him again?'

'Of course I am. He may be able to give me news of my cousin. He was her friend.'

'Well, we'll go and find him; but we must make haste, for we are losing a great deal of time.'

We went on, carefully feeling the ground before us.

'Don't go any further,' said the ant presently; 'call him.'

I shouted, 'Firefly!'

No answer. I shouted again, 'Firefly, Firefly!'

Still complete silence, and the light suddenly disappeared.

'Come along, come along,' cried the ant impatiently; 'you see it is not he.'

'I am afraid not,' I replied; 'for he would certainly have recognised my voice and hurried to me. Let us go.'

The ant turned round, and as I could not, I walked backwards till we again emerged in the open air.

'I should like once more to see the terrace,' I observed, 'where I spent such a happy time. It is not far from here. There was a grasshopper—'

'Do you suppose she is still there?'

'O, no!'

'Well, what then?'

'O, I only want to see the place again.'

'Are you sentimental, then? But come now, we shall never have done if you mean to visit all your friends and all the places where you had pleasant times in their company. I don't know how you feel, but I am famished. Are not you hungry?'

'Well, I own my appetite is becoming rather sharp.'

We did not have to look far for a dinner, as there was plenty to eat within reach. The ant made her meal off the skin of a larva, which she found under a strawberry-bush, and I contented myself with a few tender shoots of grass.

'Now, cricket, we must be off again. You still mean to go with me?'

'Of course,' I replied.

We had the choice of two roads. We could either reach our destination, the wood, by climbing up the strawberry-bed in a straight line, or we could follow the avenue for a short distance and then take the hollow path.

The ant voted for the latter, although it was rather further.

'My chief reason,' she explained, 'is that I know this way well, having gone by it some hundred times, whereas the other is quite new to me.'

'We might make a compromise,' I suggested. 'Suppose we go up

the strawberry-bed as far as the edge of the wood, and follow the latter till we come to the hollow path. I know the neighbourhood well, and if you adopt my plan we shall cut off a good piece of the way; besides, there will be less risk of unpleasant encounters.'

The ant made no objections to my proposal, and we started for the wild paddock, which formed the upper boundary of the strawberry-bed.

I had a reason, which I did not think it necessary to mention, for preferring this way. I wanted to pass the place where I had left my companions of the day before, so as to find out whether they had or had not fallen victims to the storm.

No incident worthy of note occurred as we crossed the strawberry-bed. The ground was pretty level, and but for the detours we were obliged to make round the clusters of plants, we were able to accomplish the ascent in an almost straight line.

I had made my calculations pretty accurately, for on reaching the paddock I recognised a little distance off the rabbit-burrow through which I and my companions had regained the light of day after our subterranean journey.

As we went up I told the ant of that extraordinary adventure, observing that I had made the trip we were now taking above ground in the bowels of the earth.

'Look!' I said, pointing to the gaping entrance of the burrow; 'that is where we came out. Let us go in for a minute to rest and take breath. Don't you find it very hot?'

We entered the subterranean passage, and found it beautifully cool. Worn out with fatigue, we were soon both sound asleep.

I was the first to wake, and leaving the ant to her repose, I went to take a turn outside.

It was now about four o'clock, and although it was not quite so warm as it had been the day before, the sun was still very hot.

I easily found the stone beneath which I had rested near the opening of the burrow, but there was not the slightest trace of the hole I had dug beneath it to rescue the unfortunate staphylinus. The rain had again levelled the ground all round, and I wondered if the poor beetle had been blocked in again.

'If you are in a trap again,' I said to myself, 'there you may stay, for all I care.'

On approaching the gooseberry-bush, where the spider had taken up her abode the previous evening, I was agreeably surprised to find her motionless in the centre of her web. Two or three captive flies showed that to-day her labours had not been in vain. She was doubtless taking her afternoon siesta. I called to her, and she recognised me, and came down at once.

'Is it you, cricket?' she cried. 'I am very glad to see you safe and sound; I thought you were lost.'

'I have had a very narrow escape, dear friend,' I replied. 'But here I am; and you?'

'O, I have been in no danger; the rain tore my web, that's all. During the storm I took shelter under the branches of this gooseberry-bush. But you said you had a narrow escape: tell me about it.'

'I was rolled by a torrent into the pond you see down there; but I got out all right. Have you seen the mole cricket and the glowworm again?'

'I can give you no news of the mole cricket; but I saw Firefly

go into the burrow again yesterday evening.'

'With his lamp still alight?'

'O, yes, of course.'

'Foolish fellow! And how do you fare? You get plenty of game here, don't you?'

'Yes; I've found a very good situation, and I shall stay in it. So will you, I suppose?'

'Well, I won't say what I may do finally; but just now I am merely passing by.'

'Where are you going, then?'

'To visit an ant-hill somewhere about here in the wood.'

'To visit an ant-hill! You are going into an ant-hill! What on earth do you want there?'

'O, to gratify a whim I have taken into my head.'

'Are you out of your mind, cricket? It will be simple suicide! Do you wish to be murdered?'

'O, I'm not going alone. You must know that I made acquaintance with an ant last night; in fact, I may almost say that I saved her life. We are now the best friends in the world. She has invited me to her home, and I have accepted.'

'You are going to commit a very great imprudence.'

'Perhaps I did agree rather hastily; but it is just the spice of adventure about it which attracts me.'

'You had better be warned in time. Ants are an infamous race of creatures.'

'Hot-tempered, but not bad at heart. I don't think the one who invited me is capable of enticing me into a trap.'

'Perhaps your friend is not; but the others! Take my advice, and don't go.'

'I have reason to believe that my friend is no common ant. She vouches for my safety. I think she must be a ruler of some kind.'

'Why, they have no rulers.'

'You don't say so?'

'Yes, and I repeat it; they have no rulers.'

'Are you sure?'

'Perfectly sure. They form a republic, in which all are equal.'

'Well, I have promised; it is too late to draw back: I will run the risk.'

'I'd rather you than me. But anyhow, be careful—be very careful. Beware of treading on their corns. Admire all you see; criticise nothing, and leave as soon as ever you can.'

'Don't be afraid; I am no reckless fool. And, by the way, she is here.'

'Who?'

'My friend—the one who invited me. Wouldn't you like to make her acquaintance?'

'Can't say I'm very anxious; but still, if it pleases you. Besides, I sha'n't be sorry to see for myself if your confidence is well founded.'

We found the ant awake, and busy over her toilet. When she caught sight of me with the spider, she gave the latter what seemed to me rather a defiant look. I introduced them to each other, and they bowed coldly, showing by their distant manner that neither had much confidence in the other.

The spider was the first to speak, and she addressed the ant in the following terms:

'My friend informs me, madam, that you have invited him to spend a few days with you. I will not disguise that this surprises me extremely. I thought that strangers were rigorously excluded from your settlements.'

'You are wrong, madam. I don't deny that it would be far from prudent for a stranger to intrude upon us without some sort of introduction; but we cor-

dially welcome those who come in a friendly way, especially if accompanied by one of our own people.'

'You think, then, that you can guarantee the safety of my friend?'

'Certainly I do.'

'I should not care much about going myself.'

'And perhaps you would be right. We know how to distinguish between different people.'



'And what might that mean, pray?'

'That we don't receive everybody in the same style.'

'If I understand you rightly, I should not meet with a very cordial welcome.'

'Perhaps not,' replied the ant dryly.

'May I ask why?'

The ant shrugged her shoulders, as much as to say she had no reason to give.

'Come, tell me; is it because you don't like me?'

'To be frank, madam, none of you spiders are favourites with us.'

'And what is the reason of this general dislike of us?'

'I am afraid of hurting your feelings.'

'O, never mind about that. If the reason seems ill-founded I can explain it away.'

'You will have it, then? Well, to begin with, you are said to make bad wives.'

'I suppose that accusation comes from our husbands.'

'I have been told that you sometimes ill-treat those husbands to such an extent that death is the result.'

'O, there are quarrels in every household; and as we are the stronger—'

'You are also accused of a certain fierceness of character.'

'Come now, that's really an unjust reproach, especially from you. You ants are no models of meekness.'

'We are neither fierce nor cruel. We only defend ourselves when we are attacked.'

'Then think of your avarice!'

'Only another name for our foresight.'

'And your egotism. You think the whole world is made for you.'

'We mind our own business, and leave others to do the same. Every one for himself in this world.'

'Come, come,' I broke in, thinking this discussion was becoming too bitter, 'enough of this. We all have our faults and peculiarities; let's change the subject. Didn't you tell me, spider, that our friend Firefly was in this burrow?'

'Yes. Do you want to speak to him?'

'I should not be sorry to see him again.'

'I'll go and look for him,' said the spider, relieved, doubtless, to break off a colloquy so far from pleasant.

With that she left us, to disappear in the subterranean passage.

The ant looked after her for a few minutes, and then, with a toss of her head, observed,

'That's a creature with whom I never could make friends.'

'It strikes me your feeling on that point is entirely reciprocated.'

'She comes of a treacherous race. I wonder you should have taken up with such a hussy. Take my word for it, you'll be disappointed in her.'

'Nonsense; she has put you out, and you misjudge her in consequence. As for me, I owe her a great deal; for she proved herself a faithful and devoted friend under circumstances when she might well have deserted me.'

'O, she had some interested motive.'

'I don't think she had.'

'Never mind whether she had or not; only beware of her. I repeat, beware of her.'

A few minutes afterwards the spider reappeared, and informed me that she had been as far as she could, but that she had called Firefly in vain, for no answer could she obtain. Either the glow-worm was asleep, or he had penetrated further into the burrow than she could follow.

'He heard you fast enough,' growled the ant, 'but he took care not to answer; he knows you.' Then, in a louder voice, she added, 'Come, cricket, let us be off. We must get home before night, or we shall find the doors closed upon us.'

With that she left the burrow; but the spider detained me a moment to say,

'Take my advice, and don't go. Don't trust those ants; you will never come back alive. Believe me, your trustful nature is being imposed upon.'

'I have promised,' I replied, 'and I never go from my word.'

Why, to draw back now would look as if I were afraid. If the worst come to the worst, I can defend myself.'

'You can defend yourself! What a delusion! You will be cut to pieces in less time than I can say it.'

'I shall not be eaten without first doing a good deal of execution with my jaws and claws.'

'What can you do against hundreds of ants?'

'Anyhow, the first to attack me will pay dearly for his temerity. But *au revoir*, dear friend; I must go.'

'Farewell, cricket.'

With these words I left her, and turning round a little to wave yet another farewell, I saw she was already back in the middle of her web.

She gazed after me, shaking her head.



(To be continued.)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER IX. LUCERNE.

'Yonder lies
The lake of the Four-Forest Town, ap-
parallel -
In light, and lingering, like a village
maiden,
Hid in the bosom of her native mountains,
Then pouring all her life into another's,
Changing her name and being. Overhead,
Shaking his cloudy tresses loose in air,
Rises Pilatus, with his windy pines.'

LONGFELLOW.

How often, as we stood upon the Unterwalden shore, have we watched the steamers busily steering westwards towards the distant cluster of bright-looking houses, which people told us was Lucerne!

Lucerne is the summer rendezvous of the fashionable world. Her brow is wreathed with roses, a seductive smile is on her lips, and she looks like some lovely siren reclining gracefully on the shore of the blue lake. Ulysses himself would find it impossible to pass her by; and if those who woo her only come provided with tolerably long purses, they may be as happy as kings during their sojourn in her realm.

In primitive homely Unterwalden we were brought near to the great spirit of Nature, and were allowed to see her lovely face with all its charms unveiled. But the enjoyment offered to us here is of an altogether different description. Lucerne is a gay town, and its inhabitants have long been addicted to pleasure-seeking; while her summer visitors are, of course, inclined to follow the general example.

He is a fortunate man who finds his luggage awaiting him in one of the hotels, with plenty of clean

linen and clothes, as well as polished patent-leather boots. With their help, the somewhat battered-looking butterfly, who has spent his days in roaming over the Alps, will be speedily metamorphosed into a moth, as spick and span as if he had but just emerged from his chrysalis, and looking quite fit to spend his evenings in the midst of fashionable drawing-room society.

His heavy mountain-shoes, well smeared with grease and trodden quite out of shape, are conscious of being entirely out of place here, and would fain slip back to the Alps and hide themselves; and as for his rough coat, with the odour of pine-woods still clinging to it, and young lichens beginning to take root on its shoulders, it is acutely sensible of the contemptuous way in which the spotless garments of the well-curled waiter turn their back upon him.

The traveller had better not take any such things as these to Lucerne; so, before going thither, he may as well wear out the last nail in his shoes on the hard back of the 'Esel' (i.e. 'ass'), one of the peaks on the summit of Mount Pilatus. A grand defiant old fellow is this Pilatus, and he has certainly shown great discrimination in choosing his position, for he is surrounded by beautiful meadows and forests; and standing, as he does, on the boundary-line between Lucerne and Unterwalden, at the upper end of the long cross formed by the waters of the lake, the view from his summit is magnificent. He is the



HOTEL NATIONAL, LUCERNE.

most northerly of the Alps belonging to the four forest cantons, and his attractions rival those of the Rigi. Connoisseurs in scenery, and those who consider that the chief beauty of a view lies in the number of peaks which it embraces, prefer Pilatus, because he stands some twelve miles nearer the Bernese Alps than the Rigi does. But the Rigi is a fashionable mountain, and has two railways, whereas Pilatus has to be content with only the promise of one as yet.

The aspect of the mountain, whether viewed from beneath or from the neighbouring heights, is that of a grand imposing-looking mass; split up by ten or twelve wild-looking ravines into as many jagged peaks, which stand stiffly up in the air, and resemble nothing so much as an incomplete set of decayed teeth. Those who ascend the mountain will find this look of jaggedness increase a thousand-fold; and when they have reached the summit they will see, by the incessant crumbling going on around them, that the world must be growing very old.

It is no longer the feat which once it was to ascend Pilatus; often several hundred persons visit it in the course of one day, and they have the choice of several different roads, each of them with its own especial recommendation.

The two principal starting-places for those intending to make the ascent are Hergiswil, if they approach the mountain from the Lucerne or Rigi side, and Alpnach if they come from Interlachen or over the Brünig. Those who arrive in the morning had better at once make for the Tomlishorn, as the view thence is seen to best advantage early in the day, while that from the Esel is at its best in the evening. Botanists and mineralogists had better bring

their largest specimen-boxes with them, for they will find abundant spoils; and those who love flowers may expect to revel in such a bountiful supply of glorious Alpine roses as will make them quite forget the numerous other blossoms which so beautifully adorn the High Alps. As for those who come merely for the sake of the view, surely they must be more than satisfied.

After ascending the Klimsenhorn, and climbing painfully up the dull, steep, pebbly slope, our further progress is completely obstructed by a precipitous insurmountable wall of white limestone, which stands exactly across our path. Creeping through a dark chimney-like hole, called the Chriesloch, we suddenly emerge, as if by magic, into the brilliant sunshine, and see the great calm world lying beneath us in a setting of purple mist. It is impossible to look on such a scene as this without profound emotion; but it is also impossible to analyse one's sensations, and it is anything but desirable to attempt to describe them in the visitors' book, unless one's enthusiasm be so great as to need damping.

When we have somewhat recovered ourselves, and are able to take in the various features in the scene before us, we may notice that the mountains in the east and south-east are the Alps of Uri and Unterwalden; the mass of bright silvery heads in the south and south-west belong to the wonderful region of the Bernese Oberland; and at our feet, clothed in loveliest blue and green, nestle the blooming shores of the Lake of Lucerne.

Most people, as they come down from the mountain and return once more to the dusty ways of the world, will sympathise with Till Eulenspiegel in his longing



SEMPACH.

to go aside somewhere and weep unseen.

'I wish I were a bird!' sighs some poetically-minded individual; and certainly it does seem as if it would be pleasant to be a sparrow-hawk or a merry lark, or even a robin or tomtit or tree-creeper. Yes, I should like to be a bird, as I cannot be a happy cow-keeper on some one of the many beautiful pasturages about Pilatus, such as the Frackmünd-Alp, Gochwänd-Alp, Bonern, Bründelen-Alp, Lütholdsmatt, and Laub-Alp.

Both lives are full of peril, however, especially that of the bird, to whom very little protection is afforded. Any one in Lucerne can get a shooting-license for ten francs, and for another six francs he can take his dog with him, so that a regular war of extermination is waged against everything that has breath and can boast of wings or tail. There is very little game left in the canton of Lucerne in consequence, and what little there is has fled for refuge to the quiet ravines and woods of Pilatus, and the mountains of Entlibuch.

We bid adieu to old Pilatus; and, with a gallant company of tourists, go on board the steamer at Hergiswil, and are quickly conveyed across the transparent waters to the pleasant nook in the lake where the smiling water-sprite sits enthroned amid gentle slopes and gardens. The town very soon comes in sight, and there rise before us the old well-known towers and pointed turrets, with villas smiling out of the green trees and along the shore, and the Rigi and Pilatus standing like twin citadels one on either side. As we draw nearer and nearer we see grand lines of houses, magnificent edifices of various kinds, and stately-looking hotels. We are especially struck on land-

ing by the hoary old tower called the Water Tower, which is Lucerne's badge, and which stands at the end of the equally ancient covered bridge known as the Kapellbrücke; then our eye is caught by the grand-looking church of St. Leodegar, with its graceful bell-towers, which stands half-way up the slope, and rears its head above all the surrounding roofs; then there are the mediæval watch-towers, built on the remains of the old fortifications, and the beautiful new Reuss Bridge, which leads from the railway station and landing-place to the splendid quay, with its glorious avenue of chestnuts, where crowds of fashionable people may be seen in the summer-time.

This, the first view which visitors get of Lucerne, gives the idea of a much larger place than it actually is, for the real town is hidden by the grand-looking hotels which are her especial pride and characteristic.

How much water must have flowed down the Reuss since the old times when her only foreign visitors were travelling merchants and storks! The latter made their nests on the roofs of the houses, which were of wood in those days, and so the place was called 'the little wooden stork-town.' In other lands we have seen marble replaced by wood, or falling in the course of years into decay, whereas in Lucerne wood and straw have been exchanged for marble, and cottages have been superseded by palaces filled with every imaginable comfort and luxury. This has all been accomplished within the last four centuries; for before that time there was not a single house of stone, and even the inns were old rickety wooden buildings, with rooms so small and low that no full-grown man could stand upright in them. A very



MARKET IN LUCERNE.

dim light was all that could find its way through the small round window-panes, and the smoke was allowed to disperse itself as best it might through the joints in the rafters, until it was lost in the straw or shingles of the roof.

You would look in vain for any such old stork's nest now. More than four dozen hotels and *pen-sions* of various degrees of excellence have arisen as if by magic, and in them alone there is sufficient accommodation for the whole normal population of the town, which amounts to about eleven thousand. The well-known Schweizerhof can dine nearly four hundred guests at once in its splendid dining-room. This is, indeed, a model hotel, and would take precedence of all in the town, and maybe in the country, if there were no Hôtel National; but it is outdone by the latter as regards both the spaciousness of its rooms and the refined and tasteful luxury of all its appointments. Everything here is done in great style, and those who are not obliged to look twice at their money before spending it will no doubt find themselves better off in the Hôtel National than in the good Rössli on the Mühlenplatz, or in the Engel in Pfistergasse, though they would probably be able to study national character better here than among the bored worn-out grandees of England, Germany, Russia, and America, who congregate in the aristocratic quarter. But the grand hotels and gardens on the quay possess one great charm—one, too, which never loses its freshness or becomes wearisome—and that is the view of the lake and the calm beautiful mountains beyond. These, however, we may also enjoy as we stroll along the shore, or sit in the shady chestnut avenue. If we desire a wider horizon we have but to ascend the

delightful slopes behind the town, and at Gütsch, the height of Allenwinden, or at the 'Three Limes,' we shall find ourselves in the midst of most lovely scenery.

Lucerne has often been compared with Zürich, but the resemblance between the two is merely superficial. Each stands on a lake; each is intersected by a river, in one case the Reuss, in the other the Limmat, by which it is divided into two unequal portions; and each has a glorious view of the distant Alps: but here the likeness ceases, and when weighed in the balances it will be found that science, industry, and manufactures cause Zürich's scale to descend heavily, while Lucerne's mounts high in the air. Lucerne has no trade, and her chief occupation consists in managing her hotels and attending to her summer visitors—not a very arduous one, it must be confessed; but this is no discredit to her, being merely a natural result of her past history, which has at times led her through dark paths under the guidance of aliens and those who were enemies to the fatherland. But no doubt in time Lucerne will develop her many resources, and become all that she ought to be.

If, as some maintain, Lucerne took her name from the Latin *lucerna*, a 'light,' there have been times enough in the course of her existence when the name must have seemed either a mockery or appropriate only on the *lucus a non lucendo* principle, for her light was extinguished and the most profound darkness brooded over the shore of the lake.

Shall we go back to the year 1531, when Lucerne and the other forest cantons confronted Zürich on the field of battle at Kappel? or shall we tell how the Jesuits were called in, in 1574, and how



THE CASTLE OF NEUHAESBURG.

in 1586 the disastrous Golden League was formed, which sowed discord and dissension among the Confederates? Shall we give an account of the Peasants' War, the various bloody religious wars, and the miserable Sonderbund War? Nay, if we want to furbish up our history, we shall do so more pleasantly by going to the Lake of Sempach, which lies between Sursee and the heights of Sempach, and recalls the sublime story of the 9th July 1386, when the Austrian army encountered the Confederates in a fierce contest on this spot, and the day was decided in favour of the latter by the self-devotion of Arnold von Winkelried, the knight of Unterwalden:

'He of battle-martyrs chief,
Who, to recall his daunted peers,
For victory shaped an open space
By gath'ring with a wide embrace
Into his single heart a sheaf
Of fatal Austrian spears!'

Duke Leopold and the flower of the nobility fell on this occasion, together with fifty-one men of Lucerne and their general, the noble old magistrate, Peter von Gundoldingen. The only monument which posterity has raised to their memory is the small chapel near Sempach, where a few bad pictures and worse rhymes commemorate the battle and the names of those who were engaged in it.

The Swiss Guards who fell on the fatal 10th of August 1792, while defending the royal family of France, have had a much grander memorial erected to them. It is situated at the foot of the height of Wesemlin, in the shade of some beautiful trees, and just above a green basin-shaped hollow filled with water. It is hewn out of the living rock, and apart from its associations is of the highest intrinsic value as a work of art. The colossal lion, modelled by the genius of Thor-

waldsen, lies in a dark hollow severely wounded and at the point of death; but he is dying like a hero, and to the last gasp his strong paws defend the shield with the golden lilies. An inscription was placed over it more than fifty years ago: '*Helvetiorum fidei ac virtuti*' ('To the valour and fidelity of the Swiss'), with the names of those who fell in the defence of the Tuileries underneath. Not satisfied with this, however, some Frenchman has composed the following lines—which, as he imagines, are a more faithful exponent of the sentiments of the intelligent spectator:

'Fidèles au serment que l'arreur a dicté,
Généreux défenseurs d'une injuste querelle,
Vous, morts en combattant contre la liberté,
Vous méritiez bien mieux d'avoir vécu pour elle.'

'Fighting against liberty!' These words remind us of the wicked governor who fell at Küssnacht, which, though not actually in the canton, is usually one of the excursions made from Lucerne.

'O! but we know all about that, and we really can't stand any more of it,' cries some one impatiently. Well, we promise that this shall be our last allusion to William Tell; but as Küssnacht was the scene of the most important act in his life-drama, a few words must be allowed us. Near this village was the celebrated 'Hollow Way,' where Schiller makes his hero utter the well-known monologue, which, on fine summer days, Tell's unfortunate ghost is condemned to hear repeated over and over again by the lips of juvenile collegians, bearded men, sweetly lisping young ladies, and full-grown women.

What is the picture drawn for us of the scene in our own homes by fancy, and what is the actual



THE HOLLOW WAY AT KÜSSNACHT.

reality as it now appears before our eyes? All that now remains to be seen of the 'Hollow Way' is a good carriage-road leading to Immensee and Art. There is nothing in the least romantic about it, and it is too wide for any wedding party, and still less for a single woman, to bar the way along it. The narrow part has, indeed, well-nigh disappeared altogether, and Tell's hiding-place is reduced to a small clump of trees and bushes, near which, on the spot where Gessler fell, stands a chapel adorned with frescoes by the village painter.

On a hill near the Küssnacht road are the ruins of the castle in which Gessler intended to imprison Tell; but they are very insignificant, and it is impossible for any one, however imaginative, to get up much sentiment about them.

All the old castles, of which there were several in the neighbourhood, have fallen by degrees, but the taste of the present day seems to incline to the resuscitation of the mediæval style of architecture; and though Neu-habsburg, a very interesting castle belonging to the noble Count and Emperor Rudolf von Habsburg, has sunk into decay, another much grander edifice, built in the newest French style, has been erected immediately in front of it by some nineteenth-century lordling at present unknown to fame. However, all modern builders of houses have not the same taste, happily, and there are some new dwellings which look home-like and hospitable. Many a château has been turned into a boarding-house, and many a boarding-house has been built on the same scale as a château; but none of the doings of the old brood of robber-knights have been, or are likely to be, revived. As to historical monuments, while some have been

destroyed, others have been erected, and no doubt there are many which we have not visited; but it must be confessed that one is a good deal like another, and few of them are more than five hundred, fewer still more than a thousand or a couple of thousand, years old.

There is, however, one very noteworthy object of interest in Lucerne, which, though situated near the modern monument of the Swiss Guards, boasts an antiquity of more than a thousand, more than two thousand, more than six thousand years. In fact, it has lived through several ages of the world's history, and has such things to tell us as we do not hear every day.

It is the grandest memorial in Lucerne, and its foundations were laid at a time when the great Reuss glacier extended hither from the St. Gotthard, and covered the whole district. Though of small dimensions, this, the Glacier-garden of Lucerne, as it is called, is a highly interesting spot of ground. Visitors to it will find a portion of the sandstone ridge which strikes in a north-westerly direction from the town here laid bare and exposed to view, the superincumbent earth and boulder-drift having been cleared away in 1872. In this sandstone there are large holes, some basin-shaped, some funnel-like, as much as fifteen feet deep, and as cleverly rounded as if they had been constructed by the hands of man. At the bottom are a number of colossal stone balls, some of them weighing several hundredweight.

People who like fairy tales will be inclined to think they have discovered a kitchen- or grist-mill belonging to some old giant; for there are the stone pots and mortars and millstones which the ancient Titans used to grind their corn, until they were disturbed in



GLACIER-GARDEN, LUCERNE.

their haunts and forced to flee to the mountains, leaving their rude implements behind them. Giants there were, no doubt, but they were Ice and Water, and the geologist recognises their handiwork in what, to the unscientific, look like gigantic pots and caldrons. In fact, what we see before us is

the work of a glacier; and between the holes we see unmistakable traces of its action in the striae, furrows, and scratches which a glacier invariably makes when it moves over a hard solid surface.

But what caused these great caldron-like hollows? Well, similar holes are being constantly

made in our day at the foot of waterfalls and in the beds of highly-inclined watercourses ; in fact, the same thing may occur wherever there is running water flowing along a stony channel, if only it be rapid and impetuous enough to catch up the loose pebbles it may encounter, and whirl them round and round with sufficient force.

Not that these holes at Lucerne originated in this way, for there are neither cliffs nor waterfalls anywhere near. They were formed by the glacier, as we have said before. Here and there, there were great fissures, extending through the whole thickness of the ice, and into these would fall not only the water, as it melted, but also blocks of stones from the moraines, which the glacier had brought along with it from the Alps. These, falling on the softer sandstone beneath, were rolled and twisted about for so long a time that at last they made the huge basin-like holes which we now see. The harder the blocks which slipped down the opening in the glacier, and the more im-

petuously the water rushed down upon them, so much the more wildly did these glacier-mills work, and so much the deeper were the holes they made.

The Lucerne millstones have been brought from a great distance ; some of them from the granite-gneiss of Upper Uri, and some from the Jurassic, cretaceous, and nummulitic formations which are to be found among the Alps.

Herr Amrein-Troller, the owner of the Glacier-garden, may boast of being the possessor of the most ancient and most interesting relic in Lucerne ; and, thanks to the intelligence with which he pursues his excavations, he is constantly bringing fresh wonders to light.

Lucerne's summer visitors, however, being butterflies who delight in the sunshine, will look with something of a shiver at Nature's ancient laboratory, and will congratulate themselves that she got over most of her rough work before their day, and that her present operations are carried on in the midst of light and warmth, green trees, and fragrant flowers.

(To be continued.)

SHOOTING NOTES AT WIMBLEDON.

To any one fond of the study of human nature no more amusing and interesting place can be found than Wimbledon Common during the meeting of the National Rifle Association. The immense concourse of men of all ranks, stations, and callings, brought together by the love of rifle-shooting, love of money, or mere sociability, is most wonderful. Watch the stream of men incessantly moving across the Common in all directions. Here come a group of hardy broad-shouldered North countrymen, carrying nothing but their rifles and ammunition, inwardly hoping for rain and stormy weather; next come a lot of Londoners, with rugs, umbrellas, and all sorts of *impedimenta* besides their rifles, decidedly wishing for fine weather, and hoping that the wind will not rise; here are some half-dozen men hurrying across to the pool or carton targets, anxious to get the sighting of their rifles before they go in for some big prize. Connected with this, it is curious to notice that, whilst the Englishman apparently does not care whether he fires at the carton or the pool target so long as he can get his sighting, the canny Scot invariably goes to the pool target, calculating that if he does get an eye he shall pay his expenses of the day by it; whereas if he fired at the carton, though the shot might be a carton, and perhaps the most central, thereby putting 25*l.* or thereabouts into his pocket, yet he would have to wait for this until the end of the meeting; so, on the

principle, we suppose, of 'small profits and quick returns,' goes to the pool. We next see a group of men, who are resting between the times of their firing, discussing with considerable eagerness the state of the weather, comparing notes on sighting and elevation, speculating on their own or their friends' chances of success, telling how So-and-so has come out in his shooting this year, and how another has gone off altogether; keeping up a brisk fire of conversation, until one after the other drop off, finding it is time to go to their respective firing-points.

Look at this man hurrying on, evidently a new hand at Wimbledon, in a great state of excitement for fear he should not be at his target at the exact time marked down on his ticket; invariably rushing off to the wrong set of targets, and very lucky, when he gets to his proper one, if he does not fall into the hands of some cunning old Wimbledonian, who, wishing to rest before he shoots and make himself quite comfortable, assures the neophyte that he had better put in his ticket at once; with what after-results may be easily guessed. Sometimes these new hands are very bumptious about their own shooting powers: hearing some scores mentioned as 'fairly good,' 'having a chance,' they assume a look of contemptuous pity, assuring their friends that they never make less than thirty at such a range. These go up to their targets with the greatest possible

confidence in their own powers, rejecting any hints with scorn; but when they come back their tone is considerably altered: they find that shooting at Wimbledon, with the mirage, constant shifts of wind, &c., is a very different thing from shooting at their home ranges, and after two or three failures begin to think that perhaps studying the wind-gage, barometer, light, &c., is not such utter bosh after all.

Here are two men of a type not unknown, who attend every all-comers' meeting in England, to the horror of all who have the management of them, who know their tactics—the old ones—win, tie, or wrangle; they are thorough specimens of the genus 'pot-hunter,' and though they cannot carry on their plan so well at Wimbledon as elsewhere, yet their tactics are very amusing. The two will perhaps sit down under the umbrella tent with a look of eagerness on their countenances; one of them slaps his knee, exclaiming, 'That's ten pounds out of our pocket,' clearly alluding to some score of his that has been beaten. These two divide their plunder between them, and their dodges, now that coaching is forbidden, are very amusing; they always manage to shoot together, giving their tickets to the sergeant at the same time. If the weather or light is rather bad when it is their turn to shoot, their politeness to the rest of the squad is wonderful; they are in 'no hurry,' 'have not to shoot again for some time,' will gladly 'give up their turn,' &c. When they do shoot, their plans to show each other the elevation, allowance for wind, &c., are really interesting, and the plan for bamboozling the register sergeant is quite worthy of note. When one is in the act of firing, the other begins a conversation

with the sergeant, asking him all sorts of questions about the ammunition, &c., till he draws the man's attention off the target; the one whose turn it is to shoot then fires, and if he hits the target instantly says 'Bull's-eye,' and is immediately corroborated by the other; and unless a bystander has actually spotted the dodge, the bull's-eye is scored. One of this 'pot-hunter' species at an all-comers' meeting in the country, seeing that there was a fine calm time for shooting, actually had the coolness to go to the executive officer and ask to be allowed to shoot then, out of his proper time, giving as his excuse that he was organist of some church in London, and that if he did not shoot then he should not be able to get away that night in time to perform on Sunday; however, the officer did not see the force of the argument, and made him shoot at his proper time.

Sitting near these two, and apparently trying to get into conversation with them, is one who may fairly be entitled the 'bore of Wimbledon.' He has never been known to shoot, and apparently comes for no other purpose than to bore people with his questions. Directly he sees you, he rushes at you open-mouthed, 'How d'ye do, my dear fellow? so glad to see you; haven't seen you for ages! Made any good shoots? going to your range now, are you? Then I will walk up with you.' It is useless to tell him that your target is number one; your only chance to get rid of him is if he happens to meet any one else he has the slightest acquaintance with; then he rushes off to inflict himself on him: he cares for no rebuffs, and you must simply endure him. He is a perfect plague to the officers and sergeants at the ranges, as every now and

then, taking it into his head to go to a range, he rushes up to the ropes and gets over (the policeman in charge thinking by his hurry that he is a competitor who is after his time); goes up to the sergeant, 'Any good scores to-day, sergeant? Ah, good score that,' pointing to one on the register, 'if it was not for that outer;' bothering him so that he has to inquire of the man shooting what his last shot was. The officer in charge comes up, and politely asks him to go outside the ropes, as he is not shooting. Our friend instantly says, 'O, certainly, certainly; heard there were some good scores, thought I should just like to see them. Lovely day for shooting; used to shoot myself once, when I was at Hythe.' Here the officer can stand it no longer, and walks off, giving a hint to the policeman to get the gentleman to leave; in which he is at length successful. Another amusing character is the tall old man with a small-bore rifle going down to shoot for some long-range prize. He is a very fair shot; but to make him perfectly happy you must ask him to tell you the elevation and allowance for wind required; he will invariably make a point of telling you wrong, and will then chuckle to himself for quite half an hour at the idea of how he has done you; kindly-disposed people always ask him these questions if he looks dull, to cheer him up a bit. The effect is miraculous.

There goes, with his rifle on his shoulder, slowly sauntering down the range, a man who, when coaching was allowed at Wimbledon, was the very best coach on the ground, and always ready to give his help to any one who knew him. The men of his county seemed to think that they had a perfect *right* to his services, whether he wanted to shoot himself

or not. His judgment of wind and elevation was wonderful, and the keenness of his sight almost miraculous; in the old disc-marking days we have often seen him spot down the place of the shot on his diagram before it was actually marked on the target, and if in any case there was a difference of position between the shot marked on his diagram and the place given by the marker at the target, the mistake was nearly invariably made at the target itself, as was proved in several cases. Curiously enough he is by no means a first-class shot himself, being apt in individual shooting to spoil an otherwise good score by a careless outer—at least so his friends say. In team-shooting he is excellent, always to be depended upon for a good score.

Let us now go down to the long-range butts; here you see the very quintessence of scientific rifle-shooting. Look at the rifles with every imaginable kind of sight that the ingenuity of man can devise, to suit all weathers and all eyes; on most of these rifles too there is a small spirit-level, so that the rifleman may be able to see that his sights are exactly upright and have no inclination. Look at this squad of men practising for the Elcho Shield competition, confessedly the best shots in the United Kingdom. If you have any doubt that first-class rifle-shooting requires brains and a thorough development of the perceptive faculties, one glance at this party will dispel any such doubts. See how, before they begin to shoot, they study their registers, seeing what was the elevation and allowance required on any day like the one on which they are now shooting; how they compare the state of the barometer and hygrometer; and when they have done this how

carefully they scan the different flags to see what currents of air there may be, and the sky to judge what the effect of the light or clouds may be; then the accurate way they adjust their sights, the careful look at them after they have lain down on the butt to shoot, and the steady aim and still, if possible, steadier pressure of the trigger, until the rifle is discharged; the result being at least twice out of three times a bull's-eye. As a specimen of this shooting, Colonel Bertram, in the competition for the Elcho Shield in 1876, out of his 45 shots at 800, 900, and 1000 yards made 27 bull's-eyes. But here, sitting down talking to the officer of the range, is a great Wimbledon celebrity, the gallant old North-country Colonel, who has attended every meeting since it began; he looks, as he says he is, the happiest man here. 'Old ——,' as he says, does not bother himself about shooting, but comes up to enjoy himself, and does it. He brings with him a strong contingent of stalwart 'lads,' as he calls them, and these same 'lads' seem to reciprocate most fully their Colonel's attachment. It strikes one that anybody who spoke ill of him before them would have but a bad time of it. To see the Colonel's reception the first day he appears makes one think that his right arm must ache pretty considerably before he retires to rest at night, so many and so hearty are the shakes of the hand that he receives.

At the carton targets, too, you see some very good shooting; but as a rule here, particularly at the 200 yards carton, there is a great deal of 'chaff' going on; you see none of the serious, steady, scientific work that was going on at the long ranges. Some, but these are the exceptions, are evidently going

in for the 'most central carton;' but by far the greatest number apparently think it a pleasant way of spending an hour or so, and are highly pleased at getting 5*l.* about a fortnight after the meeting closes, having usually spent between 10*l.* and 20*l.* to get it. You see the same faces here year after year,—big jolly fellows most of them, who come to enjoy themselves, and would think it an awful grind to be put down to shoot a big serious match at the long ranges. The running-deer range must, we suppose, be considered the most aristocratic one on the ground. Here you always find multitudes of ladies watching the shooting; but the actual shooting appears to be almost monopolised by two or three young men, who are rather inclined to give themselves airs if an outsider, as they consider, presumes to shoot; however, they are a little better than they were, having received one or two rather hearty snubs. We once saw them taken in in the most delightful way. As one of them was shooting, a very respectable-looking middle-aged man, evidently dressed in his best, came down to the range and watched the shooting with great interest; at length, as the shooter was doing very badly, he said quietly, 'Aim more *forrud*, sir.'

'Halloa,' says the performer, 'can you shoot? Do you know anything about it?'

The man civilly said he thought he did.

'Well, then,' says the other, 'I will stand you a gun and these five tickets, so that you may try your hand.' Then rushing off to the other end of the butt, says to his friend, 'Such a lark, Harris; I've got an old fellow who thinks he can shoot, and stood him tickets and a gun. Come and see the old fogey—looks like a butcher; daresay he has won half a pig at

Christmas at Hendon.' So down both of them came to see the man perform, and took pains to tell all their lady-friends of the fun.

The man took his place, and the deer was started; he fired rapidly, before the deer had got half way across, and hit it in the head.

Says Harris, 'What a fluke! I tell you what, old chap, I'll give you 10s. every time you make a bull's-eye, if you'll give me half-a-crown when you hit the haunch.'

The man said he did not mind doing it, and a bystander, who had noticed the shot and had seen that he had aimed at the head, quietly pointed out the part to be hit to score a bull's-eye. The long and short of it was that out of his four shots two were bull's-eyes and the other two close up. The man rose and pocketed his 17. and civilly thanked the two young men, who looked thoroughly sold and were awfully put out at having been so taken in, and so publicly too.

Just as the man was leaving the range, a hearty-looking old gentleman called out, 'Why, you here, James!'

The man said, 'Yes, my lord; knew you had come down here, and wanted to see you about the game, and then thought I'd like a look at this here.' And he then told his master the story, to the old gentleman's great amusement, who then went on to the range and told the officer there, to his great amusement also, and the two young men, to their great disgust,

that the supposed 'butcher' out for a holiday was his head-keeper and one of the best shots at deer in the kingdom. The two fellows' faces were a sight, and they have been uncommonly shy of chaffing or baiting any stranger at the range ever since.

Let us now go back towards the clock-tower. There goes a small-bore man, studying intently what at first looks like a betting-book—but, thank goodness, it is not that, but merely his shooting register—followed by a small boy carrying his rifle, glasses, box, and all the miscellaneous collection of things that appear to be the necessaries of a small-bore shot. Here rushes the unfortunate captain of some team or other, looking everywhere 'for that wretched fellow Johnson, who always *will* get out of the way—lunches when no Christian ever does—got up all the team but him—will never have him again—he is always doing it.' Next go a party up to the further ranges for the Alexandra, each man not exactly wishing that his friend might lose, but perhaps hoping that his own score may be just one point the best. And here go a noisy laughing party off to the 200 carton, full of 'chaff' and evidently only caring for the fun of the thing, and not bothering themselves about grand and scientific shooting. In short, the groups and faces you see everywhere are most amusing, and it is well worth any one's while to come down to Wimbledon merely to study physiognomy.

A FORTNIGHT IN PARIS.

UNAPPALLED by the alarming accounts of exorbitant prices which enlivened the columns of the daily papers in the first week of May, we decided on seeing the great Exhibition of 1878 before the freshness had worn off the show, or the perfume of the limes had departed from umbrageous Paris. We are a small family-party, consisting of paterfamilias, materfamilias, and our eldest daughter, who has never seen Paris, and who burns with impatience to behold that illustrious city.

In the all-important matter of lodgings we have been fortunate. A friend who has been staying in Paris on her way to Germany has been kind enough to secure us apartments in an old-fashioned family and clerical—intensely clerical—hotel in the good old Faubourg St. Germain, where the long narrow old streets present a curious mixture of the gravedulness and dignity of the past with the commerce and bustle of the present. Here a stately hotel, *entre cour et jardin*, green trees growing in the stone-paved quadrangle, ivy-mantled walls, curtained windows shutting out the world; there the busy little wine-shop, with its shining counter and neat array of many-coloured bottles; the appetising display of the *charcutier*, strong in unknown combinations of pork and inexplicable sausages; the grocer, baker, and candlestick maker.

Hitherto we have taken up our abode in the fashionable quarter, at hotels where English was as familiar a language as French, and

where half the faces one met were the well-known faces of Regent-street and Brighton. Now, for the first time, we feel ourselves verily inhabitants of Paris. We have been warned that our hotel is *un peu trop Français*; but even this does not appal us, as we have grown familiar with French hotels in the provinces, and have learnt to endure their inconveniences. The rooms taken for us are not large, and they are nearer the stars than we could have wished; but at such a time *que voulez-vous?* Every hotel in Paris is full to overflowing, and we are informed by our landlady that all the hotels *de côté* are charging extravagantly. The rooms are neat and clean, comfortably furnished, light, and airy. There is a charming coffee-room, looking into a quadrangular garden in the good old style of the Faubourg; a solemn old *parloir*, where one can write letters—or could if there were any ink worth speaking of, which there never is—and where the stately solitude is enlivened by a young lady in an adjacent apartment practising elementary classical music with a heavy finger. There is a courtyard with a convenient bench in it, where the gently-falling blacks remind us of home. There are *curés* and *abbés* passing and repassing—black, smooth, and courteous—on the staircase; and last, but not least, there are a good cellar and an excellent *cuisine*.

It is just eleven years since paterfamilias and I have visited Paris, and we perambulate its

streets to-day in the spirit of Rip Van Winkle, awed and amazed at the startling changes we behold. Ah, what changes! The bright streets have lost their old gaiety. The brilliant uniforms, the rattle of the drums, the pioneers in their leathern aprons, the Emperor's carriage with its mounted escort dashing along the Rue de Rivoli, the calm beauty of the Empress's perfect face, with its winning smile for all the world, the tall trees that shaded the gardens of the Tuileries, the good old palace itself,—all gone. Is it I that have grown old, or has there verily vanished from these familiar streets somewhat of their old charm?

Our first visit is to Notre Dame. Why, what is this? What has become of the *cité*, the unsavoury old *cité*, with its labyrinth of narrow streets, its busy population? All gone. We left the grand old cathedral encompassed and hemmed in by shabby old houses; so close beset that one had to rick one's neck in order to get a view of that gorgeous *façade*. We find it to-day standing boldly out upon an open place, completely restored, perfect in its incomparable beauty.

Surely of all the cathedrals we have seen this is the richest and loveliest. Not the grandest, perhaps. One is not impressed by a sense of magnitude; it is the grace, the exquisite harmony of the edifice that charms one—the infinite richness and variety of detail, the noble altitude of that vaulted roof, the beauty of those lofty galleries. And has not this fane been peopled by a great poet? One almost fancies one sees Esmeralda's white drapery gliding along one of those galleries, vanishing through yon narrow doorway. There, amidst all those emblems of sanctity in this glorious temple of the living God, the

wicked fated priest nursed his unholy passion, for which he was to meet his hideous doom yonder, from the outward gallery we know so well. The clever little guide, who leads us through the sacristy and round the chancel, has not a word to say about Victor Hugo's marvellous romance; but he says a great deal about the Commune—how they turned the stately church into a market, and used the painted windows for targets, and chopped off the figures in the series of *bas-reliefs*, representing the life of Christ, which decorate the choir. We see a still more awful witness of the horrors of revolution in the sacristy, where the lively little man shows us the pierced and blood-stained robes of three murdered archbishops, two of them slain by the mob.

In the cathedral all has been restored. No trace of Communistic destruction remains; but there is a deep hatred of the Commune in the heart of our guide, who can find no words bitter enough to express his anger or his scorn.

From the cathedral we drive to the Grand Opéra by a magnificent new street, the Avenue de l'Opéra, where the builders are still at work, and where there are a great many shops still to be let. It looks as if it were going to be one of the grandest streets, for its length, in Paris, and must be always full of traffic, as it cuts diagonally from the Théâtre Français to the Boulevard des Capucines. On the Boulevards there is little changed, save that the trees are taller, and there is a general leafiness which somewhat obscures the brightness of the scene; and the *cafés* look to us less crowded than of old. There are not so many people sitting out on the pavement, and the *gommeux* are conspicuous by their absence.

We walk as far as the Porte St.

Denis, starting with the heroic determination of doing the whole of the Boulevards; but we arrive at St. Denis in a state of exhaustion, and there resolve upon trying that unknown institution, the Parisian omnibus. Our advice to travellers with the same idea is to abandon it at once and for ever. The Parisian omnibus, unless you repair early in the morning to its starting-point, is an impossibility.

We took our tickets at a little office by the gate of St. Denis, admiring the order with which such things are managed in France, and thinking how poor a thing our own omnibus system is in comparison. In the innocence of our hearts we offered to pay for these tickets, little dreaming how impotent their power to procure us seats in any vehicle on that side of midnight. Anon we found ourselves in the midst of a seething crowd, all holding tickets, all looking wildly towards the approaching 'bus, as drowningsailors to a lifeboat.

On the front of the omnibus appeared the mystic word *Complet*. This was not encouraging.

The omnibus drew up, the seething crowd rushed to the door. 'Forty-nine, fifty,' called the conductor. Two eager travellers, brandishing their tickets, struggled through the crowd and clambered into the vehicle. The conductor rang a bell, and omnibus number one drove off in triumph.

We looked at our numbers—sixty-one, sixty-two, sixty-three. Ten more of that eager throng must be seated before we could find refuge from the stony streets. We looked yearningly at the passing cabs: all were full. There was nothing for it but to wait.

We did wait, patiently, heroically. Never was paterfamilias more lamblike in his demeanour.

Was it because he laboured under the painful conviction that if he swore no one would understand him—it would be wasted thunder? Omnibus after omnibus drove up, stopped its appointed moments, and departed. Most of them bore the fatal word *Complet*. Now and then the conductor bawled, 'One place, one place only,' and the elect one in that long-suffering herd—a kind of open-air edition of the Black-hole at Calcutta—writhed and wriggled himself free of the crowd, and scrambled to a seat. This was repeated for an indefinite time, and still we saw no hope of rescue. The cry was still 'One place, one place only,' and what was the use of one place among three people? So we politely returned our tickets to the little clerk in the office, and plodded bravely down the Boulevard in quest of a cab.

Now, unhappily, the cabs of Paris are not what they were in the days of the Empire. Then a *voiture à quatre places* was the rule; now it is the exception. The vehicle most frequently to be met with is a small victoria, and happy the chance when it is provided with a cricket-seat, just adequate for the support of a light weight, and prone to give way under the lightest. A party of three are therefore at a disadvantage in the streets of Paris. The charioteer looks at them, shakes his head, and pursues his course. Sometimes a used-up brougham is to be had, and then it is even betting that there is a third seat; but, O, what squeezey little vehicles those broughams are for three occupants! and how more than likely that the harness will have to be repaired with a bit of whip-cord before we get to the end of our journey!

We are bent on seeing all the newest features of Parisian life; so

when we do get our fly we drive straight, not to the *Café Anglais* or the *Maison Dorée*, but to the *Bouillon Duval*, on the *Boulevard de la Madeleine*, bent on trying the cheap dinner which we have heard so highly lauded by travellers. We go early, to escape the crowd, and secure a table in a window overlooking the *Boulevard* and another seething throng surrounding another omnibus. We dine, and dine well, and it must be acknowledged that our dinner is of the cheapest—about five francs a head, two bottles of old *Macon* included. But when it is all over, and we have had every dish jotted down on our card, and have been waited upon in rather a scrambling manner by the fair attendant in black gown, smart white cap, and muslin apron, and have eaten our dinner without a table-cloth, and have had the fourth place at our table taken by a stranger, and have pushed our way through the crowd of diners that have filled the rooms while we have been dining, we come to the conclusion that *Duval's* is in some wise a delusion and a snare. We find, after a fortnight's experience in Paris, that we can dine as cheaply, and much more comfortably, elsewhere: There is the *Maison Tout*, opposite the *Madeleine*, where a capital dinner may be got at a very moderate price; the *Café Corazza* in the *Palais Royal*; the *Restaurant Lapérouse* on the *Quai des Grands Augustins*. If people want to dine gorgeously at famous restaurants they must pay for the indulgence of their epicurism; but if the visitors to the Exhibition eat to live, instead of living to eat, they may fare excellently at any of the three places I have mentioned. But I would certainly recommend them, if their time is valuable, and their tempers are not altogether sera-

phic, to avoid the *Bouillon Duval*. The great caterer no doubt provides honestly and admirably for the citizens of Paris, who want to dine cheaply, and who do not mind crowd, and scramble, and a deafening din of knives and forks clinking against plates and dishes; but for the English traveller, accustomed to dine in tranquillity, the *Bouillon* is not all-sufficient.

We rise early on our second morning in Paris, breakfast very comfortably in the pretty coffee-room at our hotel, and start for the Exhibition directly after breakfast. We drive past the *Invalides*, where the dome, which was gilded during the latter days of the Empire, is shining in the morning sun. We take our tickets at a little wine-shop opposite the entrance on the *Boulevard de la Motte Piquet*. No money is taken at the doors of the Exhibition, and by this wise rule much loss of time and vexation of spirit is avoided. Cabmen have to be paid before approaching the entrance. The traffic is blocked by no disputations between driver and passenger.

Our first impression of the great show on that pleasant morning in May was that things were still very far off a finish. We entered upon a chaos of gardening, building, watering, rolling, digging, and delving, which one hardly expects to find in an Exhibition which has been opened with spouting of fountains, firing of guns, and all possible flourish nearly three weeks ago. We had come in at the back door as it were, and matters at this end of the building were woefully in arrear. We tramped through mud and mire; praised the fruit-trees growing on trellises of every shape and design; glanced at *Duval's* Swiss pavilion, crowded with breakfasters; pushed our way into a shed where there

was a fine display of French delf and pottery of the cheap and showy kind, some of it very pretty and artistic; and then entered the main building by the *Galerie du Travail*, where every variety of small manufactures was being carried on, from diamond cutting and polishing to the making of feather flowers, and gilt-wire baskets at twenty sous apiece. Our first day was to be given to art. Only on rare occasions is such a feast provided for the lover of pictures and sculpture. Never perhaps was there so fine a collection of statuary gathered under one roof. The half-dozen statues which took the town by storm in the Exhibition of 1851 would be lost amidst the sculpture contributed by Italy alone—sculpture far surpassing in beauty, variety, freedom, and *chic* anything familiar to untravelled Englishmen. Here are no uninteresting busts of ladies and gentlemen, with shoulders neatly draped for the hairdresser or the Turkish bath, but pictures in marble or in clay, every group, and even every single figure, telling its story. Did Elmore ever paint a sweeter picture than that 'Faust and Marguerite'? Did Sant ever surpass the coquettish beauty of those dainty little girls in marble? Did Murillo or John Philip ever produce a more powerful pair of Spanish *gamins* than those 'London Newsboys'—two young ruffians struggling with each other for preëminence? Every limb is full of life and movement. Then there is that humorous group of the old grandmother washing her grandson, a dirty little scoundrel who evidently detests soapsuds. Before this group the French peasants and their wives stop in delighted amazement. That dirty boy amuses them intensely. They are intimately acquainted with just such a ras-

cal. The 'Diver'—a young lady in very limited bathing-costume, with her arms extended for a header—is also popular; but though this figure is natural and clever it would hardly be beautiful in drawing-room or gallery. The extended arms make a direct line, which is too suggestive of the semaphore.

The exhibition of Beaux Arts occupies the central galleries throughout the building. The plan is simplicity itself. You travel from room to room, always keeping straight forward, beginning with Austria and ending with England, which latter country, in the matter of painting, may, I think, be fairly said to bear the palm. There are fine pictures in each national collection, very fine pictures even in the smallest, as witness the noble life-sized picture of 'Milton dictating *Paradise Lost* to his Daughters' in the Danish Gallery, and the exquisite 'Prometheus and Semele' in the Swiss collection. There is wondrous power of drawing and exquisite detail to be seen on all sides. In the quiet pathos and variety of domestic life the painters of the Netherlands surpass the English school; in portraiture the French leave us far behind; but coming into the English gallery, after making a tour through the pictures of the modern world, we see a richness and warmth of colour, a solidity and vigour, which go beyond all we have seen of the continental school. The French visitors to the Exhibition are for the most part enthusiastic in their praises of the English pictures. Except from one old gentleman I hardly heard a dissentient voice, and he was certainly decided in his opinions. 'Je les trouve tous affreux,' he said, after having marched with uplifted nose past the masterpieces of Frith, Millais, and Poynter; 'l'un est aussi bien

que l'autre.' Pleasant in a strange land to hear the standard Englishman's warm appreciation of native art. 'Haw,' exclaims a well-dressed loungeur, 'here's what's-his-name—Frith's "Derby Day."'

The 'Derby Day' and the 'Railway Station' are a source of unfailing delight to the French visitors, though to my mind a finer picture than either is the 'Last Sunday in the Life of Charles the Second,' a noble historical work, which shows how high a place Mr. Frith might have taken in this school of art, had he not elected to be the painter and satirist of modern manners. Millais's landscapes are warmly admired. Alma Tadema's pictures delight the connoisseurs; perhaps most of all that lovely little bit of colour, 'The Roman Garden,' a gem of rare beauty, hung in a corner where it might almost be overlooked among Mr. Tadema's more important works. Elmore's two striking pictures, 'Lenore' and 'Mary Stuart at Jedburgh,' look as fresh and rich in colour as when they were first exhibited, and are both full of interest. There is a 'Medea' by Sandys, a face of remarkable power, which in modelling and finish is as fine as anything done by Greuze. It would take a month to see this wondrous assemblage of all that is best in European art, as it should be seen. In the French school we miss those pictures which made the glory of the show in 1867. Meissonier is but poorly represented. Gérôme sends only his smaller works, but those are exquisite. From the English gallery we cross the Pavillon du Prince de Galles, where there is a crowd looking at the Prince's Indian presents, and so out to the gardens, where the grass that began to grow the week before last is being cut and rolled, and

new plots of ground are being coated with rich black earth to grow more grass. Everywhere they are potting out flowers; everywhere the nozzles of the garden-hose are spirting forth their refreshing rain; manure is being dug in, standard roses are being tied up, all the operations of horticulture are going on simultaneously; and even now the grounds are full of flowers, the roses are blooming luxuriantly, the ferns are uncurling amidst artificial rock-work refreshed by gentle streams.

We ask a good-natured looking gendarme—I beg his pardon, I believe he is not called by that name nowadays—to direct us to a *café* where we shall not be too desperately 'flayed.' He shrugs his shoulders, tells us that flaying is the order of the day, and that one *café* is a little dearer than another. The *café* proprietors have it all their own way just now. Exhausted nature must be restored at any price. We refresh ourselves moderately, and pay immoderately, and pass on, leaving more than one native squabbling with the waiters, and protesting against the charges.

Here is the Pavillon des Forêts, a very perfect collection of all implements and products peculiar to forest life. There are the skins of all the animals, a collection of all the insects, the weapons, tools, clothes, *sabots*, iron-work, everything. There are interesting models, most especially a series which shows how the French Government has lately employed much labour and capital in planting pine-woods on the sandy wastes at the mouth of the Gironde. This improvement, we hear outside the Exhibition, has not been altogether pleasing to the inhabitants of the district, though it gives them work. The land, such as it was, had hitherto

been usurped by the peasantry as commonage. The scanty herbage feed their flocks, and though they have no proprietary right to the soil they resent its loss. The march of improvement is a Juggernaut's car that must always crush some small interests.

And now we mount a gentle ascent, between odorous beds of purple stocks, which fill the air with perfume, and approach the temple of the Trocadéro, with its tall twin towers, visible from all the outskirts of Paris. This semi-circular temple, still unfinished as to its interior, affords a delightful walk in an open colonnade, whence one can contemplate the city from different points of view. The galleries are dedicated to what is here called Retrospective Art, and will afford a permanent museum of antiquities. Here entrance is strictly forbidden, and the sound of the hammer tells that the business of unboxing, as I heard an American visitor call it, is going on rapidly. But we are woefully weary by the time we reach the Trocadéro; and what a relief it is to get into a fly, and drive through the bright leafy Champs Élysées to the Place de la Concorde, and thence to the Café Vachette on the Boulevard Poissonnière; to dine well but modestly before we start, rested and refreshed, for a stroll on the Boulevard, through the Rue de la Paix, across the Place Vendôme, where it is a comfort to see the familiar statue safe on its column; and thence to the Palais Royal, where the shops seem to have improved in character since we last saw them, and where there is a fine show of diamonds. Chevet is unaltered and unalterable. He survives revolutions, he flourishes upon the wreck of dynasties. There are the same live turtles wriggling in their tank in the

window, the same Gargantuan asparagus. Here is Véfour Aîné, and here is Véfour Jeune. There was no Véfour Jeune in our days; but we had one never to be forgotten little dinner *chez* Véfour Aîné, with the brightest of English journalists and humorists for our host, which we think of sadly to-night as we look up at the window of the little *salon*.

Next day to the Exhibition again. This time we drive to the Trocadéro, and enter at that end. We have made plans for doing our work in a very business-like way; but the Exhibition is a too distracting place, and we do not adhere to our plans strictly. Here are model Norwegian houses; here are Japanese, Tunisian, Algerian, Moorish, Chinese bazaars full of fascinating absurdities; and here on the outside of the show there is a continual traffic going on. Inside the building articles may be sold, but not removed. Each object is labelled with the name and address of the purchaser, and I fancy there is a little quiet advertising done in this way by some of our London tradesmen. And now for a perambulation of the central arcades, where the decorative arts may be seen in full force. Furniture in every variety of style—Jacobean, Queen Anne, Louis Quatorze, Louis Quinze, Louis Seize; bronzes, ormolu, brass-work, inlaid work, tapestries of the most exquisite workmanship, and at really moderate prices—we noticed a sofa with richly gilded frame, and seat and back of superb tapestry, for forty pounds. Triumphs of ceramic art are to be seen in the French galleries—modern Sèvres equalling in beauty the richest works of the past, modern Palissy, Henri Deux ware, or *Faïence d'Oiron*, vases painted with flowers on a ground in every

variety of colour, from the palest celadon to the deepest Indian red—but in porcelain the French manufacturers can show nothing to surpass the collection exhibited by the Royal Factory at Worcester. Here there are a pair of vases, illustrating the manufacture of pottery in Europe in the sixteenth century, which are simply incomparable. Here too are vases in a creamy tint, covered with the finest pierced work, and simulating ivory. Here is a Japanese dessert-service, on which the gold is raised and modelled as never gold-work was executed on china before. Minton's collection is rich in beauty: we especially remark a pair of large vases, of the Sevres blue tint, with figures of men in armour, in full relief, a magnificent specimen of pottery.

Paterfamilias is deeply interested in furniture and the decorative arts; so all through this day we wander in wildernesses of bronze and ormolu, in groves of carved ebony, in labyrinths of chairs and tables and buffets and bookcases, all beautiful, and most of them costly. We see nothing in gilded woodwork to surpass the furniture we have seen in Messrs. Nosotti's show-rooms at home; no brass bedsteads or mediæval furniture superior to the display to be seen in Messrs. Jackson & Graham's windows any day in the year. That which interests us most in the English department is the old English house—better known as the Prince of Wales's Pavilion—built by the Royal Commissioners, from the designs of Mr. Gilbert Redgrave, for the President of the Royal Commission. The interior has been fitted up, furnished, and decorated by Messrs. Gillow & Co. of Oxford-street, in association with a number of industrial art manufacturers. This is a sight not to be omitted by any

visitor to the Exhibition. The house is perfect in every detail; but perhaps the most striking feature in the decoration is the tapestry which covers the wall-space above the dado in the central hall or dining-room, a large apartment, treated in the Jacobean manner, and so thorough in its tone and colouring that one could fancy oneself in some good old moated grange deep in the heart of the Midlands. These tapestry panels represent a series of scenes from the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, and have been worked at the Royal Windsor Tapestry Works, from the designs of Mr. Hay. The Architect writing of this work says: 'We hail with satisfaction this revival of tapestry-work in England. . . Since the days of Charles I., who caused to be executed five of the well-known Raphael cartoons in tapestry, at the works at Mortlake, founded by James I. in the beginning of the seventeenth century, no attempt has been made to carry on the manufacture, if we except the brief existence of the small manufactories in Fulham and Soho in the end of the last century. The Windsor tapestry is worked horizontally, or in *basse lisse*, like the old work of Beauvais and Arras, in contradistinction to the *haute lisse*, or vertical warp, of the Gobelins; the cartoon is placed underneath the tapestry-work or *tissu*, so that the back of it is only before the workman, and the working of the design is thus made much more difficult. The wools for the work are all dyed at Windsor; and some idea may be formed of the immense variety of tints required when it is stated that at present upwards of 8000 shades are produced, and these are capable of being multiplied to nearly three times the number, by mixture and com-

bination in their use in the *tissu*.'

Dark-green velvet *portières*, worked with an *appliqué* border by the Ladies' Work Society in Sloane-street, divide the central hall from the Prince's morning-room and the Princess's drawing-room. This latter is the gem of the building. It is octagonal, lighted from above, decorated in colours of wonderful delicacy and softness. The furniture is of the 'Chippendale' character, all of satinwood, covered with bluesatin, to harmonise with the pale-blue diapered-satin panels, which form a portion of the most elaborate wall-decoration. The inlaid folding-doors opening to the Princess's dressing-room are a triumph of modern art and workmanship.

From this exquisite English interior to a homely Dutch dwelling-house at the other end of the building is a long walk, and the contrast between the two houses is as wide as it well can be. Here we are carried away from the luxury of royal boudoirs and dining-halls to the sober simplicity of a *bourgeois* household in the Netherlands. Here is the parlour with its quaint old chairs and buffets, and with life-sized wax figures representing its inhabitants—figures so natural in colour and modelling, so infinitely superior to the ordinary style of waxwork, that, looking over the shoulders of the eager crowd, one is almost deceived by the clever imitation of life. We squeeze into the kitchen, where the wax-work mistress and maid are busy at their homely labours—such a cosy little kitchen, with a wonderful stove half as big as the room, and a row of old blue-and-white delf plates surmounting the cornice. Close to this model house, which is so crowded that one can hardly see half its beauty,

there is a long narrow court, also densely crowded, where there are numerous groups of wax figures illustrative of Dutch life. The fishwoman in the market, the lady in her sledge, the apple-cheeked peasant-girl gently yielding to her lover's kiss, the visitor making an inquiry of the soberly clad respectable-looking maidservant,—these, and many more, are here, and all wonderfully true to life. This collection is assuredly one of the most interesting in the great show.

After dining comfortably at our restaurant on the Quai des Grands Augustins, in a pretty little room looking over the shady river-side walk and the bookstalls, the steamers crowded with tired humanity returning from the Champ de Mars, and the stately buildings on the opposite shore, we cross the Pont St. Michel and the Pont au Change, and meet our friends, who have secured a box for us at the Théâtre Historique, one of the handsomest theatres in Paris, where we are to see a grand spectacular melodrama, *Un Drame au Fond de la Mer*.

The Historique is a kind of twin-sister of the Théâtre du Châtelet. They were both built at the same time, the former being intended for opera, in which line it unhappily did not prosper. It is a remarkably elegant house, commodious, lofty, well lighted and ventilated, and worthy of a higher class of drama than *Un Drame au Fond de la Mer*, which is the old Adelphi style of melodrama, bristling with striking situations, effective tableaux, and gross improbabilities. A part of the action takes place in Ireland, and William - street — 'Will - yamm-stritt'—Limerick, is represented as a primeval forest, with a Swiss chalet in the foreground. The penultimate act introduces us to

the coroner of Limerick, a gentleman who seems to exercise unlimited magisterial power, and to embody in himself all the functions of public accuser, judge, and jury. His manner of interrogating the prisoner accused of murder is strikingly novel. The final act shows a wild and rock-bound shore, which might stand for anywhere between Kilkee and Connemara, but which, for the convenience of the drama, is supposed to be within a stone's throw of 'Will-yamm-stritt.' Here the villain of the piece gloats over his hidden treasure, while the innocent and wrongfully suspected hero hides in an adjacent cave. Here retributive justice comes, swift of foot, as it ought to be, seeing that it is already on the stroke of midnight. The unmasked villain flings himself into the sea, the supposed victim of treachery and murder reappears alive and well, and the hero is restored to the arms of his sweetheart and the good opinion of his fellow-men.

Next day we join friends who, after living all their lives in Paris, are going for the first time to the catacombs, a sight which is now only to be seen on certain occasions and by special permission. It is not by any means an agreeable sight, nor are these darksome quarries a scene to which one would desire to return; but it is a thing to see once in one's life, and to remember with shuddering awe ever afterwards.

At one o'clock on a sunny day we find ourselves with about a hundred other people waiting in a little yard by the *Barrière d'Enfer*. We are all provided with candles, which we hold in our hands as in a religious procession.

We go down a winding stone staircase, like those many turret-stairs we have ascended to see some fair English landscape from

the top of a good old church-tower; but to-day we are 'not going up towards the bright blue sky, but down into the damp cold stony bosom of the earth. We are warned to keep our garments away from the walls, from which the damp oozes slowly. The steps are of the steepest, the descent laborious. The candles bob and flicker and sway to and fro. Everybody walks fast. Sometimes we fancy ourselves left at the tail of the procession. The pale little flames—mere dots of light in the darkness—are all hurrying away. We remember how we read in Hachette's *Paris Guide* that, in consequence of the numerous accidents that have formerly happened, isolated visits to the catacombs are no longer permitted, and we are very glad to hear voices behind us. And now we are down in the quarries—long uninteresting passages, stony, monotonous, leading to the kingdom of the dead. We travel for an immense way, as it seems; sometimes stopping at a corner to peer down into the black throat of a well, sometimes reading an inscription on the wall, which tells us what street of Paris is above us, or when the wall was repaired. We begin to wonder, rather wearily, when we shall come to the bones. At last we reach a large vestibule with a hollow cone-shaped roof, like an inverted well, which penetrates to the upper air, though no ray of light pierces it. And now we enter verily into the precincts of death—wholesale, uncatalogued death. These are the bones from the Cemetery of the Innocents, transported here in 1796 under the direction of M. Thiroux de Crosne, lieutenant-general of police, whose predecessor, M. Lenoir, had the ingenious idea of relieving the overcrowded and pestiferous graveyards of Paris by transferring

their contents to these ancient quarries, which undermine a considerable portion of Paris, and which, after threatening mischief to the upper earth by falling in at different points, had been lately put into a state of perfect solidity and safety.

Seventy staircases give access to this gloomy under-world. The number of the dead was in 1857 estimated at three millions; but this is supposed to be far below the true number. We passed in front of long walls made up of bones, stacked like wood in a wood-yard, each block of bones surmounted by a neatly arranged line of skulls. It is strange to note the variety of types. The broad and noble brows, the monkeyish receding heads, 'the narrow forehead of the fool,'—all are here. Beauty and wit have come to this. We read the sentences, moral and poetic, inscribed on the walls. We pause before the altar in a funeral chapel; and then on again, following the swiftly advancing specks of light, past endless blocks of closely packed bones and grinning skulls, solemnly hideous in decay. The oozing water-drops from the roof fall on us as we pass along; the ground is miry and clammy; our feet stick to the clay. Horrible to be left here with extinguished candle, and to have to grope our way along these avenues of death! Sometimes we seem on the point of losing ourselves. There are sharp turns where the candles suddenly disappear, long passages where the track of glowworm lights straggles away into darkness. O, how heartily glad we are when we come to the foot of another staircase, and begin slowly ascending towards upper earth again!

We go that afternoon by rail and tram to Marly. A new steam

tramway now goes from Rueil to the very gates of the park where once stood Louis XIV.'s favourite habitation, in the days when to be received at Marly was to take rank among the chosen few, to be accounted a friend and intimate of the great king. The revolution of '98 swept away the château. The park remains in melancholy beauty. It lies at the top of a hill above the Seine, three-quarters of an hour's walk from St. Germain, a spot of peculiar beauty in an atmosphere of singular purity and freshness. We dine in the little village, so utterly rustic and primitive that one might fancy oneself three hundred miles from Paris and the International Exhibition. Never did we see the Gloire de Dijon in such luxuriance and perfection as in the gardens of Marly; never breathe such odours of orange-blossom as from the acacia groves that surround the little railway station of Rueil, which we leave in the May twilight on our way back to Paris, past Mount Valerian, and across the Seine.

Next day is Sunday, and after a morning at Notre Dame we charter a victoria à l'heure, and drive past St. Gervais—which we explore *en passant*, and which is well worth a visit for its fine old painted windows—to the Rue St. Antoine, the very name of which recalls the dreadful days of the Terror, across the Place de la Bastille, where, from an antiquarian point of view, one almost regrets the disappearance of the black walls and the deep moat that enclosed so many sufferings, such rank injustice. Here instead is the genius of Liberty, standing a-tiptoe in the sunshine. We drive down the Rue de la Roquette, past the prison where only the doomed enter, and across the broad boulevard to the gate of

Père la Chaise. How the trees have grown since we were here last, and how shabby the tombs look in the rank weed-grown paths! We keep God's acre better in England. The neat gravel paths and trimly-cut shrubs of Woking would put to shame Père la Chaise, for all its Egyptian pyramids and classic temples. We see many monuments that were not here eleven years ago, notably that of the Duke de Morny. How the sight of that stately marble tomb recalls the vivid description of the Duc de Mora's funeral in Daudet's *Nabab*! One feels as if one had known the man, as if one had stood beside his death-bed. Here, near Balzac and Nodier, Soulié and Souvestre, is a simpler memorial to the gifted actress, Aimée Desclée. Below the name is inscribed a list of the plays which her genius helped to make famous: *Froufrou*, *La Princesse Georges*, *Une Visite de Noces*, &c.

We find a crowd round the little family chapel which is as yet the only monument to Thiers—a reverent crowd peering in at the altar, heaped with perishing tributes from the students of various colleges—huge wreaths of yellow immortelles, metal laurel-crowns inscribed 'To the Deliverer of his Country.'

When we leave the cemetery we ask our charioteer to show us anything worth seeing on that side of Paris. He scratches his head dubiously, and looks painfully vacant; but as we have given him a tumbler of red wine and done our best to make ourselves agreeable to him, he racks his brains until he hits upon something. 'I can take you to the Buttes-Chaumont,' he suggests.

We have not the faintest idea what he means, but, being utterly unable to suggest anything better,

we say, Yes, decidedly; the something de Chaumont by all means. And off we go, at the leisurely pace of the carriage that plies by time, along the broad new boulevard, where the low, irregular, shabby houses of the past are rapidly being shouldered off the soil by tall stone mansions of the prevailing pattern. They are built on a plainer model here, where they are designed for the working classes. The festoons of fruit and flowers in carved stone, the mouldings and stringings and cornices and brackets and pediments are less elaborate; but otherwise there is little difference between the Boulevard St. Germain and the boulevard which, under the names of Ménilmontant, de Belleville, and de la Villette, cleaves through the heart of the working population of Paris. Never have we seen such a neighbourhood. Narrow streets, densely populated, old, dilapidated, lead off from the boulevard at every turn. This is Belleville, of which one heard so much in the days of the Commune. This is La Villette, equally known to fame. What a neighbourhood, what a population! and to-day tranquil, happy, decently clad, and to all appearance respectable. Imagine St. Giles's, Lambeth, the New Cut, Bermondsey, Somers Town, Ratcliff Highway, all rolled into one, and that may give some faint idea of Belleville and La Villette. The streets into which we gaze wonderingly are so full of people that if you were to throw a shuttlecock among them it would hardly reach the ground.

Street after street is blocked with the same dense throng. Here on the boulevard is a kind of fair going on—jugglers, merry-go-rounds, children and young people disporting, ancient gaffers and goodies basking in the sunshine.

The whole thing looks pastoral and arcadian.

And now we slowly mount a malodorous street, so steep that our consciences upbraid us for letting the long-suffering horse scale such a hill. We are evidently on the threshold of some place of public entertainment. Here is the noted house for *la galette*, with *bosquets* where one can dine.

At the top of the hill we see foliage waving greenly, and anon drive into a park which is really one of the prettiest and most picturesque public parks we have ever seen. O familiar Victoria, O native Battersea, your beauties are flat and commonplace compared with this rocky undulating pleasure-garden of Chaumont! Yet in 1866 this park had no existence. The Buttes-Chaumont, the western promontories of the hill of Belleville, were vast quarries, of picturesque aspect, situated between La Villette and Belleville, at a height of 83 to 100 yards above the level of the sea. With infinite pains this district has been transformed into a verdant and fertile park. The quarries, with their precipitous peaks and crags, have been preserved in all their wild and rugged outlines; but the stone has been covered with vegetable earth, and clothed with grass, ivy, wild flowers, and various kinds of foliage, save where the gray boulders jut forth, in picturesque contrast with the verdure and bright-hued flowers.

Wonderfully artistic are the effects produced with the commonest flowers. Here the vivid scarlet of a tuft of poppies pierces the green; there the steep side of a craggy hill is clothed with a dark-crimson flower, and feathery with fern. There are classic temples on pinnacles, and Swiss chalets perched on sequestered

hill-tops; there are waterfalls and lakes, and winding paths, and sunward-fronting slopes and green valleys. But on this Sunday afternoon that which is more wonderful than all is the crowd of humanity that covers every green slope, and fills the valley with the sound of many voices, like the surging of a great sea. The vivid blue of the blouses gives brightness to the mass, and makes a ground of azure for the many-coloured garments of the women. The boys leap and run, like troutlets in a pool, but they are a great deal noisier than troutlets. There are babies without flumber—French babies—old and weird of aspect, carried by small boys. There are well-dressed citizens in broadcloth and top-hats elbowing the blouses, and young ladies in their hair cheek by jowl with the newest thing in bonnets. There are carriages with liveried servants waiting for aristocratic loungers. Every class is represented at the Buttes-Chaumont. It is a great sight. Here comes a military band, and lo, there rises a loud acclaim, as with one voice, a mighty shout of rejoicing. And thus we leave them.

Another day at the Exhibition, a musical evening in a Parisian family circle, a day at Versailles, where we explore the two Trianons, and loiter in the wooded gardens, where the nightingales are singing, and where the temples and summer-houses, the dairy and grotto that delighted Marie Antoinette, are as carefully kept as if she were coming back to-morrow to occupy them. So with the furniture in the Great and Little Trianon—the tapestry, chairs, and sofas; the embroidered satin hangings; the tall stately bedsteads—all looks as fresh as if it were the work of yesterday. And yet the

bloody tide of revolution has rushed through those rooms. The attendant points to mantelpieces on which the Sèvres vases are new. The original ornaments were destroyed in the revolution.

From these two quiet homes of a vanished royalty we go back to the courtyard of the great château, and to a widely different scene. The republican Chamber is sitting, and the waiting-rooms on the first floor are thronged with an ever-increasing crowd. Names are called in stentorian voices. Messages are despatched to various deputies. 'All numbers up to one hundred may enter!' roars an official; and those of the crowd who are provided with tickets file off to the chamber, where the auditorium is as elegant as an opera-house, and more densely filled. We have no tickets, and we are assured that the benches of the spectators are filled to overflowing. But a kind official takes pity on us, and passes the word to his brother functionaries; we mount a broad staircase, and are ushered to places in the very centre of the semicircular auditorium. It is an interesting scene; but the deputy now discoursing, with a paper before him, is alike prosy and inaudible. We enjoy the *coup d'œil*, but hear very little of the speech; and half an hour later we are in a handsome tramway car, full of deputies, going back to the railway station and to Paris.

The rest of our fortnight's holiday we devote to the Exhibition, with an occasional hour among the old churches, in the crypt of the Panthéon, where there are a fine statue of Voltaire, a remarkable echo that is worth hearing, and a number of empty niches waiting for the remains of great men, 'when there are any,' as the guide remarks somewhat cynically. We revisit the pictures in the Luxembourg,

and the pretty gardens of that fine old palace—gardens which are so full of roses, that we envy the nurses and children so pleasant a resort in the stony heart of Paris. We look at the Sorbonne, and explore the Boulevard St. Michel, and the narrow streets that remain of the old students' quarter. In a word we do Paris as thoroughly as any great city can be done in a fortnight, and turn our faces homeward, delighted with our holiday, and very glad that we had courage to come, in the face of all that had been said about overcharges and extortion. Our holiday cost us little more than if we had spent it at Brighton or Torquay, and we had refreshed our minds with the picture of one of the finest cities in the world, and the most wonderful International Exhibition that was ever put together. Every one who can take a holiday trip ought to go to Paris this year. The roads are many, and offer agreeable variety. For the man of business, to whom time is of more consequence than money, the mail or the tidal boat is the only way; but for those who can afford to take their time, and even loiter for a day or two on the road, the route by Newhaven and Dieppe or by Southampton and Havre offers far greater attractions. For choice I should certainly take Havre. The boats are largest and best. The great maritime city and port of Havre is well worth a visit. Trouville, Deauville, and Etretat are close at hand. From Havre to Rouen is an easy stage, and a day can be profitably spent exploring the magnificent churches and the interesting museum at Rouen. France, provincial or metropolitan, is always worth seeing, but never was France so well worth the cost of a visit as in this year of grace 1878.

A TALE OF THE SUMMER.

O, SWEET is the south wind's sighing,
And sweet is the brook that sings,
And a myriad sweets are flying
To stir of a myriad wings !
And the murmurous air is heavy
With scents of a myriad flowers,
And the wealth of a golden summer
Is falling in rainbow showers.

The birds and the bees are flying,
And the slanting sunbeams play,
And lips that I love are sighing
For one who is far away.
O love, I am near—am coming—
Though the wandering song-birds stray ;
For my heart is weary of longing,
And will love and trust for aye !

Ah, sweet ! when the day is dying
Away in the crimson west,
And your lips their secret sighing
(As though it were all unguessed) ;
When heart to heart is replying,
And you know that my life is blessed,
Methinks that the sound of sighing
Will pass in a kiss—to rest !

* * * * *

The flowers at her casement flutter,
With touch of a passing wing ;
The secret I long to utter
The nightingales softly sing.
She heeds not their passionate voices,
She sees not the amorous light ;
For her heart with my own rejoices,
And love is our world to-night !

RITA.

RUBY.

A Water-colour Sketch, in Six Chapters.

"I have a smiling face," she said;
"I have a jest for all I meet;
I have a garland for my head,
And all its flowers are sweet;
And so you call me gay," she said.

* * * * *

"But in your bitter world," she said,
"Face-joy's a costly mask to wear;
'Tis bought with pangs long nourished
And rounded to despair;
Grief's earnest makes life's play," she said.

"Ye weep for those who weep," she said.
"Ah, fools! I bid you pass them by.
Go, weep for those whose hearts have bled
What time their eyes were dry;
Whom sadder can I say?" she said.

E. B. BROWNING.

CHAPTER I

I WAS sitting alone one afternoon by my open window looking out into my garden, and thinking of all the ups and downs along which my path through life had lain. I was born and bred in comfort, and in early youth had never dreamed of the great change which actually came over my fortune just as I was growing up, when my father lost his all with the failure of a speculation in which he had embarked. He did not long survive this calamity, and I was driven to gain my own livelihood as a governess. A year or two ago, however, an old friend, who had shown me many a kindness in my days of dependence and distress, died, and left me five thousand pounds. It was not great wealth, but it was riches to me; it was enough to enable me to renounce teaching, to take a small house in the neighbourhood of a country town, to gather my own possessions around me, to set up my household gods, and to enjoy the pleasure of entertaining my friends occasionally at tea.

Thus much for myself. But my

thoughts on this afternoon were less of my own individual history than of that of others with whom my lot had been cast; and from dwelling upon certain characters with whom I had once been associated, and whose lives had worked themselves into my own, I fell into a speculative train of thought on the numbers there are who go through life morally masked. Society, I thought, with its varnished sophistries, and your friends with their own masks on, demand the same of you; and though your face may be fair, how very few care to see it as it is! There are some, too, who wear their disguise because duty bids—grandly, patiently, nobly. I have known such a one, and it was of her I was thinking just then, when my musing was broken by the entrance of a young friend, whose pretty face and bright youth are very cheering to me in my solitude.

'Well, Annie,' I said, 'I was wondering when I should have another visit from you.'

She kissed me, and, seating herself in a low chair by my side, said,

'I have treated you shamefully lately, I know, but I have been so busy—you can't think *how* busy. I hope you have not been very dull and lonely?'

'No, dear,' I answered; 'I am rarely dull; and as for being lonely, well, I generally find my own thoughts very companionable.'

She gave me a smile, half in pity of such companionship. Though not really more than forty, to this child of eighteen I am of course long past middle age.

'What *do* you find to think about all day?' she asked, with a genuine curiosity to investigate something altogether beyond the reach of her comprehension.

'When you came in,' I answered, 'I was thinking about that picture;' and I pointed to a small water-colour drawing that hung over the piano. It was only a sketch, not devoid of defects, but yet exhibiting considerable talent—the sketch of a beautiful face, wherein what struck you first was the intense reality of the expression. It had been painted on tinted paper; the background was carelessly scratched in with a soft pencil, and in one corner were the initials, 'R. D.'

'O, I've often noticed that picture,' said Annie; 'it fascinates me. It is one of the sweetest faces I ever saw, I think; it is not only so beautiful, but so bright, so smiling, so happy-looking.'

Annie's description was perfectly just—that was the predominant expression of the portrait; and yet I answered,

'It is one of the sweetest faces and one of the saddest, to my mind; it fascinates me too—it haunts me sometimes.'

She turned upon me a pretty look of incredulity.

'One of the saddest?' she asked. 'O, no, surely not.'

'Shall I tell you her story?' I said. And Annie eagerly accepted the offer.

I had left my first situation as governess, and was looking out for another, when one morning the post brought me an answer to my advertisement, which promised better than any I had yet received—to be in the country most of the year; three girls to teach, whose ages ranged from ten to seventeen; salary what I required; and what surprised me much, while it promised considerably to lighten my duties, no tuition in music or singing expected of me. I closed with Mrs. Gascoigne at once, and within a week from that time I made the acquaintance of my pupils. Their father was a country gentleman of moderate means, much taken up with county business and politics, and seeing but little of his children; their mother was a managing, energetic, vulgar woman, devoting herself to the welfare of her daughters, possessing good sense and some right principles, though both were permeated with a strong leaven of worldliness, and devoid of all tenderness, sympathy, and sensibility. I judged her from the beginning as hard-hearted, a judgment which I am inclined to think she would almost have reckoned as a compliment. Her eldest daughter was two-and-twenty—a tall, fair, ladylike girl, very passive by comparison with her mother—of whom Mrs. Gascoigne was exceedingly proud, and for whom she was always planning and dreaming a splendid marriage. The eldest son was in India. Then came my three pupils—Eva, Alice, and Nelly—all different editions of the same type. There was besides a schoolboy, whom I saw but seldom, and two little ones in the nursery. Altogether it was as uninteresting a family as any with

whom it has been my lot to live.

It was the morning after my arrival, just as I was beginning to fathom the extent of knowledge to which my pupils had attained, that Mary Gascoigne, the eldest of the family, came into the schoolroom, and asked her sister,

'Eva, mamma wants to know what time Ruby is expected, because the dogcart is to be sent to fetch her.'

'At five o'clock,' said Eva. 'But it is raining so; she'll get wet through in the dogcart.'

'It's mamma's order,' said Mary carelessly. 'The carriage-horses were out yesterday.'

'Ah, well, it is only Ruby,' laughed Alice; 'she never takes any harm like other people!'

This little conversation interested me. Already more than once I had heard Ruby mentioned, and my curiosity was stimulated to learn who she was; that she was held of small account in the family I gathered from the way in which they usually spoke of her—'*Only Ruby.*'

'Who is Ruby?' I asked.

'O, she's a sort of a cousin,' explained Alice. 'She has no other relations but us, and she lives here.'

'She's grown up, you know,' added little Nelly; 'and she teaches us our music and Mary her singing.'

A poor relation—just what I had expected—a poor relation who bought the protection of a home by saving her cousins the expense of a music- and singing-mistress. This was the explanation of my lightened labours, and, guessing that her musical talent must be something more than ordinary, I began to anticipate much pleasure from her society.

'She is supposed to sing wonderfully well,' remarked Eva;

'and she certainly *has* taught Mary something. Mary sings very well, you know—at least, so mamma thinks.'

'Ruby's mother was an actress,' said Alice—'an actress who used to sing comic songs, and dance.'

'Well,' interposed Eva, with a touch of dignity, 'of course we don't care to remember *that*, as she *is* a cousin and lives with us.'

Poor Ruby! I felt much interested, and longed for five o'clock. I gathered from Mary that Eva and Alice had spoken correctly, and she further volunteered, in her usual passive manner,

'Ruby is very useful, and though she is about my own age, I do not find her in my way.'

Evidently, thought I, this young thing, probably full of life and spirits, and capable of enjoying pleasure and society, is considered here less as a cousin than as a governess; and I remembered with some bitterness all the drudgery and the discipline which I had undergone before I had taught myself resignedly to accept my present position in life.

Tea was over, and my pupils on hearing the approach of wheels scampered out into the hall. I had quickly perceived that, for all they held their poor cousin of small account, she was popular to a certain extent with the younger members of the family. I thought perhaps they would bring the new-comer and introduce her to me; but either from heedlessness, or from shyness, or from ignorance, they omitted this slight act of civility. I had come to the conclusion that I should not see Ruby until the next day, when the door suddenly opened and she entered the schoolroom alone. She came straight up to me, shook hands, and said, with the most perfect grace,

'I did not like to let the evening pass without making your acquaintance, Miss Campion.'

'It was very kind of you, my dear,' I answered, for I was always grateful for any little attention. 'And you are—Ruby?'

'Ruby, Rubina Gascoigne,' she said.

I had expected to find in her a young girl, possibly pretty, but with a patient weary face that told of hard work, and suggested a painful consciousness of her dependent position—a girl with a timid manner perhaps, who would shrink from me at first, but whom I would win into love and confidence. Or again, I had expected a plain girl with a countenance expressive of cleverness, who took life as she found it, and did her duty; and I had expected a calm girl, gentle and obliging, who compelled the love of others by her simple sweetness. I was prepared, in fact, for anything but what I actually found in Rubina Gascoigne.

She was, without exception, the most lovely creature I ever saw. Her nose was small and slightly turned up; her mouth a perfect bow, and expressive of every variety of feeling; while her large brown eyes, looking out playfully from under their deep lids and long lashes, were soft and wild by turns, and bright as the very stars. I cannot tell you how she arranged her hair; I only know that it was soft and brown, and lay low on her forehead in little rippling curls. I thought then, and I think still, looking backwards through the years, that her beauty was complete; her smile, her figure, her movements, were all perfect.

'Rubina Gascoigne,' she said, with a smile. 'I daresay they've told you about me already. A sort of a cousin, eh?'

It was exactly the term Alice had used, and I asked, smiling, in my turn,

'What makes you guess so very correctly?'

'O, I know them,' she answered gaily. 'Haven't I heard them hundreds of times? They don't know whether to be ashamed or proud of me, poor children; and they take their tone from their mother.'

'But you *are* a cousin, are you not?' I asked.

'O, certainly,' she answered, standing with one little hand on her hip, and the other resting on the mantelpiece, an attitude that in any one else would have been ungraceful. 'I'm a Gascoigne, but I'm rather a piece of patchwork, and I have Bohemian tendencies. My mother was a Frenchwoman—an actress of the Opéra Comique—and I was born at Vienna; my father ran through all the little money he had, and a great deal more besides. I've been here six years; but I led an odd sort of life before, and I've had a queerish education. I haven't father or mother now, or a penny I can call my own; that's my history.'

It was a sad history, I thought; all the more so from the seeming absence of all consciousness on her part that there was anything sad about it. I was fascinated and interested, and the tone of confidence which she had already begun to adopt towards me made me feel as though I had known her for weeks, instead of only for a few minutes.

'But you are happy here?' I asked, less because I believed that she really was so than from a desire to draw her out further. She made a little *moue mutinée* as she answered,

'O, yes, happy enough. I'm never very unhappy anywhere;

life is too short to be wasted in weeping and pining. Don't you think so? I keep out of their way and they keep out of mine, and neither of us cares a snap of the fingers what becomes of the other.' And she broke into a low silvery laugh.

'Mr. and Mrs. Gascoigne have been very kind to you, have they not? I asked, a little puzzled by her bright carelessness, which seemed so at variance with my own lessons of experience and my own preconceived idea of the effect usually produced by a life of tuition and dependence.

'I suppose I ought to think so,' she replied, with a playful toss of her head; 'but they could hardly have done less than offer me a home, considering I had no other relations in the wide, wide world, and considering the circumstances in which they found me. For, after all, I *am* a Gascoigne, you see; and that is what I tell myself when I'm wishing I were singing and dancing on the stage. *Kind* is a relative term, Miss Campion,' she added, looking at me slyly from under her half-closed lids, 'as I daresay you've found out long ago. I'm tolerated here on condition that I make myself useful. I am not meant to go to balls and parties, and be presented at Court, like Mary.'

'Do you have no society, then?' I asked, with some commiseration.

'O, I have it in my own way,' she said. 'It's generally stupid enough here; but I can always amuse myself when I choose. I'm expected to sing and play, you understand; and sometimes I get a crowd of listeners round me, and give Mrs. Gascoigne more than she bargains for.' And she rang out such a merry peal of laughter that I caught the infection, and laughed too.

It was an unspeakable relief to

me to find Ruby so totally different from what I had expected; I should be spared much that was painful, much that was harassing, much that was difficult. Far from needing a protector, far from entertaining a sensitive consciousness of her peculiar position, she seemed to be perfectly capable of taking care of herself, and to be so fortunately endowed with a vivacious happiness as to leave no room for morbid misery. To myself she would be an inestimable gain, with her quick intelligence and her sweet beauty, among so much that was dull, commonplace, unsympathetic; and yet I could not but feel a sort of pity for her too, for all she was so richly endowed. She seemed to have been thrown broadcast, as it were, upon the world, with not a living creature round her who held itself responsible for her actions, her future, or her fate. Though so different from the sort of girl I had made up my mind to protect and befriend, yet she too needed the watchful eye of love—needed it all the more because she was so light-hearted, and seemed so utterly indifferent to neglect from others. 'For none of us can laugh for ever, Ruby,' I thought; 'and it is a sad thing when a young girl can say that no one cares a snap of the fingers what becomes of her.'

I soon found that Rubina was quite competent to train my pupils to a high degree of musical excellence without any coöperation from a professional teacher, and that Mary Gascoigne, thanks to her, sang with more finish and execution than the ordinary run of amateurs; but it was not till three or four days after my arrival that I discovered how exquisite was Ruby's own voice. It was on the occasion of a large dinner-party, when in the evening Mrs.

Gascoigne, according to her custom, desired Rubina to go to the pianoforte to accompany Mary in a new song. Ruby at the moment was sitting on a sofa by the fire, talking behind the shelter of a huge fan to a tall gentleman-like man, not very young, whom I afterwards discovered was Sir Robert Debarry. * Simultaneously with her dismissal of Ruby to the piano Mrs. Gascoigne said, smiling, to Sir Robert,

'Won't you come and sit a little farther from the instrument? I know how fond you are of music, and you would hear so much better at a little distance: really, dear Mary *does* sing this song remarkably well.'

I saw Ruby give a glance at me in my quiet corner, accompanied by a gesture of scornful merri-ment, as with a graceful indolence she moved to her post.

'It suits her voice very well, does it not?' said Mrs. Gascoigne, when the song was ended.

'It does,' answered Sir Robert, a man of a grave countenance and cold formal manner; 'and how admirably Miss Rubina accom-panies!'

'She has a good touch,' said Mrs. Gascoigne, evidently annoyed at his indifference to Mary's singing. 'Rubina, play that sonata of Beethoven you have been practising the last day or two.'

Mrs. Gascoigne thought by this to make a show of impartiality in her display of the family talent; but I noticed that she never said one word in praise of the young teacher to whom Mary in a great measure owed her proficiency. I also noticed that Sir Robert kept his eyes fixed on Ruby during the whole of her performance, and when the last chords had sounded he asked immediately,

'Won't *you* sing us a song now?'

'Fifty, if you like,' was the quick rejoinder, while she shot him one of those bright bewitching glances from her soft eyes which, if often repeated, might, I began to suspect, speedily enslave Sir Robert Debarry.

And then she sang! As I listened I hardly knew whether I longed most to cry or to smile; for there was such graceful mirth in the rendering of some passages, such thrilling pathos in others, while a tone of the most exquisite tenderness pervaded the whole, that all the deepest emotions of my heart were stirred within me. The voice of a bird, the voice of an angel, the voice of a light-hearted child,—it suggested all these by turns, and yet you felt that each was only the mouth-piece, as it were, for the outpouring of the soul of an intensely passionate woman. And could this be the same Ruby who had looked across the room at me only a short time before? I had bowed my head on my hands to hide the exhibition of my feelings; and when I raised it, as the echo of the last notes died away, Ruby was acknowledging the murmur of applause which greeted her, with a quiet smile on her mobile mouth—a smile indicative of a consciousness that she had done very well. Then I glanced at Sir Robert Debarry. The gravity of his countenance was, if possible, intensified, but the cold expression of his eyes was replaced by an earnest light which beamed stronger as he came up to Rubina, thanked her in a low tone, and pressed her to sing again.

'Who is Sir Robert Debarry?' I asked of Eva the next morning.

'He is a neighbour,' she replied, 'and has a beautiful place, which joins on to ours. He's a good sort of a man, they say; but he

alarms me—he is so solemn and silent. Mamma fancies he admires Mary; but I think he's a regular old bachelor.'

And I was sure that Eva's perceptions were no clearer than those of her mother. Sir Robert Debarry was quite ready to forego bachelorhood for the sake of Rubina Gascoigne. But as for Ruby herself, though she was as ready for harmless flirtation as any other pretty lively woman, I could not detect any marked sign that she either encouraged or valued Sir Robert's attentions.

I used often to persuade Ruby to sing to me when the day's duties were ended; I always found her kind and obliging, and simple kindness goes very, very far towards winning all the love of a poor lonely thing such as I then was. A little higher than a servant, yet not admitted to the privileges of a friend in the family, mine was a life of patience, of watchfulness, of responsibility, of early rising and late rest—a life of weary work given and scant gratitude received—a life where little love was offered, and still less sympathy; but the simplicity with which Ruby exercised her great talent solely for my pleasure touched me to the heart, accustomed as I was to slights heedlessly inflicted. Through the long weary hours of drudgery I used to look forward to the pleasure of listening to her rich, thrilling, sympathetic voice—to the pleasure of closing my eyes and letting the exquisite sound work its will with my highly-strung susceptibilities. Once she turned round suddenly and surprised me in tears. She stopped and began to apologise, with a pretty look of pitying dismay.

'Never mind,' I said, trying to smile; 'it is only because your voice has such a sweet sad ring

in it. I don't mind crying like this; it is half a pleasure.'

'Don't mind crying!' she repeated, breaking into her usual low merry laugh; 'I never cry, Miss Campion. I don't believe I could if I tried.'

'Then I can't understand how you sing with such intense feeling,' I said; 'you puzzle me, Ruby.'

'O, that's because I'm an actress,' she answered gaily, 'a consummate actress.'

CHAPTER II.

A MONTH or two went by, and nothing of much importance occurred to break the daily monotony of our existence, till at the beginning of the winter a sudden change took place. Alice, who had been very delicate for some time past, was ordered by her doctor to winter in the south of France, and as Mr. Gascoigne was also in a poor state of health, it was settled that the whole family should remove to Cannes. Of course I was included in this arrangement, and Ruby too, who was nearly wild with delight at the prospect of revisiting the country which claimed half her nationality.

My story, however, has nothing to do with our stay at Cannes, but with a trip to Rome on which we started after we had spent about two months in France. Mrs. Gascoigne had made up her mind that there was nothing like travelling for perfecting a girl's education; it was an advantage which Mary had not yet enjoyed, and she and Eva must not miss so excellent an opportunity of cultivating their taste for pictures, and of extending their knowledge of the Italian tongue. Mrs. Gascoigne herself could not leave the

invalids and the younger children, but the two girls would be under my charge, and Ruby would accompany us, as the facility with which she spoke French and her knowledge of foreign life would probably be of much service to us. The arrangement was made entirely by Mrs. Gascoigne; we were all submissive under her guidance; and though I trembled a little at the amount of responsibility thrust upon my shoulders, my eager desire to visit Rome conquered all my terrors and scruples. Neither Mary nor Eva was difficult to manage: when beyond the reach of their mother's ceaseless energy, far from requiring a restraining hand, they usually suffered from a reaction of indolent passivity; and as for Ruby, she and I were such complete friends by this time that I never doubted we should pull well together.

They were very bright and happy, those days we spent in Rome; what a pity that a great dark shadow from the after years hangs over them and clouds their beauty!

I had not lived long with Rubina without discovering another talent besides that of music of which she was possessed. She drew with considerable cleverness. At all spare moments, if she could lay her hand upon a pencil or a pen she would scribble down sketches full of life and character—sometimes a portrait, sometimes a caricature, occasionally sweet little compositions spun out of her pretty fancy. She had once had a few lessons, from which she had derived immense profit, and I learnt that her talent was inherited from her father. To her Rome was a perfect Paradise. I never saw any one more completely absorbed in study of the old masters; she was indifferent to the churches;

she took no interest in the excavations; she laughed away my lectures on Roman history; every day she went off to the Vatican or to the Borghese, Doria, or Corsini palaces. Sometimes when her cousins expressed themselves weary of pictures she would go alone, an arrangement which, much as I disliked it, I was forced to submit to, as my first duty was unquestionably to Mrs. Gascoigne's daughters, who had been placed under my charge.

'I'm a waif and a stray,' she said once to me, with her light-hearted laugh, 'and fortunately no one sees the necessity of putting me under anybody's charge.'

This remark was called forth by a gentle protest which I had ventured to utter, when with much glee she suddenly informed me that she had received permission to copy in the Palazzo Corsini.

'You ought to be very glad,' she said, with her pretty coaxing manner that neither I nor any one else was ever able to resist. 'There I shall be safely disposed of three times a week; glued to one spot, instead of wandering about as you so much dislike; you will know exactly where I am and what I'm doing, and you and the girls can roam in the tombs or sun yourselves on the Pincio to your hearts' content. O, I feel so happy, I don't know what to do!'

And she burst into a trill of song sweet as the nightingales that sang in the ilexes and the stone-pines. Dear child! what a power of enjoyment there was about her! what a genuine capability for extracting the full sweetness out of any pleasure, however small, which came in her way! How fortunately spared, so thought I, those keen sensibilities, those fine-drawn sympathies, those deep emotions which go so far towards accumulating the mass of self-

torture of which one half of our sufferings is constituted ! Of course I yielded my consent—in-
deed I had not the power to with-
hold it ; but I could not refrain
from saying as she bent down to
kiss me,

‘You must not call yourself a
waif and a stray, Ruby ; it makes
me sad to hear you ; you are not a
waif with me for a friend.’

‘I should have thought I was
the last person to make any one
sad,’ she answered gaily ; ‘don’t I
look very happy ?’

‘Yes, dear child, that you do,’
I said, meaning it truthfully.

‘And I feel so happy,’ she con-
tinued : ‘nothing ever makes me
low and miserable ; not even my
poverty, not even those stupid
tiresome cousins with their pa-
tronising ways.’

‘I hope you will always feel
the same,’ I said, from the depths
of my heart.

She was silent a moment, and I
watched two or three different
expressions sweep across her beau-
tiful face ; then she said, with a
slight stamp of one foot, and in a
tone almost fierce in its decision,

‘I shall always look the same—
I always admired the Spartan boy
who let the wolf gnaw his entrails
without a groan—and no matter
what I suffered, I should wear a
smiling face.’

‘I hope you will never be put
to the test, dear,’ I said, with a
smile of complete incredulity.

I can see her now in one of the
smaller rooms of the Palazzo Cor-
sini, with her easel set up in front
of a head of the Angel Gabriel by
Guercino, striving to reproduce the
exquisitely delicate shades of brown
and red, yellow and gray, some-
times working at her own canvas
with a diligence that showed how
her heart was in her labour, some-
times sitting with idle hands but
busy brain in earnest contempla-

tion of the masterpiece before her.
I can recall the whole scene : the
pendant by Guercino of the ‘An-
nunciata,’ and between those
two heads the ‘Ecce Homo,’ the
‘St. John,’ and the ‘Mater Dolorosa’
by Guido ; I can see Bassano’s
fine picture of the ‘Tribute Money,’
and the Murillo on the opposite
wall ; I can see the quaint little
portraits so called of Martin Luther
and his wife by Holbein ; but
clearer than all I can see the young
artist who came to that room to
copy the ‘Ecce Homo’ the very day
after Ruby had established herself
before the ‘Angel Gabriel.’ Side by
side they sat and worked. How
many times, I wonder, in the
course of one day, as they turned
to look at their models, did their
eyes cross each other ?

I had let Ruby go to the Palazzo
Corsini several days without being
able to visit her there ; Mary and
Eva required my presence in quite
another part of the city, and for
quite other occupations. When
at last, however, I found time to
inspect the progress of her picture,
I was a little surprised as I entered
the room where she worked to
find her in eager conversation with
her fellow-artist. They were
neither of them at their easels,
and as I glanced at the half-finish-
ed pictures it struck me that not
much work had been accomplished
that day. On seeing me Rubina
greeted me joyfully, as she always
did, yet I thought I noticed a
tinge of heightened colour on her
cheeks as she said,

‘I have been pursuing my
studies in a different way to-day ;
we have been making a tour of
the whole gallery together, and
Monsieur de St. Felix has been
pointing out the principal beauties
in each picture.’

I took this as a form of intro-
duction to Monsieur de St. Felix,
and made him a grave salute,

which he returned as gravely. He was a good-looking young man—I saw that at a glance—with a tall lithe figure, dark almond-shaped eyes, and black curls, that had evidently been arranged with a view to artistic effect; and yet there was something about the lower part of his face that I did not quite like. It was not that the mouth was unrefined or ill-made, neither that it was hard or weak; but it seemed to me indicative of a selfish nature which would never be touched too keenly by the sight of suffering in others, never be struck too remorsefully with the recollection of what another had undergone for him. I cannot tell exactly whether this was the judgment of a moment, or whether I made it out afterwards by the light of subsequent events, but I know my first impression of him was not altogether pleasing.

‘Mademoiselle has great talent,’ he said, looking from Ruby to me; ‘I never played the part of cicerone with so much real pleasure before.’

‘I daresay not, monsieur,’ I answered. And I think he understood the meaning of the tone in which I spoke, for he turned away and took up his brushes, with a muttered excuse about the waning daylight.

No doubt the part of cicerone had been very pleasant to play, with so much beauty and intelligence waiting in breathless interest for every word he uttered.

‘Who is this Monsieur de St. Felix?’ I asked of Ruby, as we were threading the narrow streets between the Palazzo Corsini and the Piazza di Spagna.

‘He paints divinely!’ was her somewhat irrelevant answer; ‘and he teaches one to notice subtle beauties that escape an untrained eye, you know. O, I have learnt so much to-day!’

‘But who is he? I asked a little impatiently. ‘What do you know about him?’

‘Armand de St. Felix is his name,’ she replied, ‘and he belongs to a family of the *haute noblesse*; but he is going to devote his life to the study of art. I know the name; I lived once close to his father’s château, and he was so pleased when I talked about the place. He is a Frenchman, you understand—compatriot,’ she added, with a gentle laugh.

After this I walked on in silence. I desired to administer some caution, but without overstepping the bounds of friendly courtesy. I was old enough and experienced enough to know that the best-meant warnings sometimes serve to no other purpose than to create the very danger which their object is to avoid. I knew that by speaking I might possibly suggest to Ruby the idea of what had hitherto not been awakened within her; I feared that by silence I might probably leave her to walk over a precipice with her eyes blindfold. I was puzzled. As I have said before, it was not within my power to forbid her studying in the Palazzo Corsini, nor was it within my power to accompany her while she was there. At last I said,

‘You told me once, Ruby, that you had had a queerish sort of education; well, dear, I don’t think you quite realise what it is wise and well for a young girl to do and to leave undone. You see, you don’t consider yourself responsible to any one beyond a certain point, and you won’t believe that any one holds himself responsible for you. That being the case, you should take more thought for yourself, and particularly you should be very careful what acquaintances you make, and where and how you make them.’

I felt thoroughly miserable as I made this little sermon, and spoke very nervously as I concluded. I feared I was magnifying a trifle into a great evil. I dreaded that Ruby might think herself justified in taking offence, and I would not for the world have lost a grain of the friendship that was so precious to me, or have cast the shadow of distrust between her and myself. I could not say anything further, but waited for her answer. It came after a short pause—a simple 'Thank you;' nothing more. And we did not speak another word till we reached our hotel in the Piazza di Spagna.

It was about a week or so later that Mary and Eva had arranged to go with some friends to see the remains of an ancient building which had recently been discovered beneath the foundations of the church of San Clementi. Of course I was going with them, though I was aware that the avowed object of the afternoon's entertainment was not much more than an excuse for a meeting with their friends.

'Are you coming with us, Ruby?' asked Mary, as we were discussing our arrangements for the day. I knew that both she and Eva rather disliked their connection with Rubina to be paraded before their friends; they were half ashamed, half jealous of her, and I suspect she knew it as well as I did, for she declined the invitation at once, treating it as the mere formality it was intended to be.

'Off to Corsini, as usual, I suppose?' I said.

'No, I don't think I shall to-day,' she replied, with a yawn. 'I think the heat and the monotony and the smell of paints are beginning to knock me up. While you are groping by torchlight underground up to your ankles in water,

I shall go and breathe some pure air in the Villa Borghese, gather some violets, and listen to the nightingales. I think I shall have the best of it.'

'Ah,' I replied, laughing, 'I never quite believed in your protestations of unceasing devotion at the shrine of Apelles.'

'Not at all,' she rejoined, with a playful pretence of being piqued; 'I am only going to worship in the open air. I shall take my water-colours and study from Nature. I've long wished to make a sketch of the Villa Borghese from the ilex avenue.'

Ever since my meeting with Armand de St. Felix I had been wishing for something to occur which might keep Ruby from her painting at the Palazzo Corsini; but now that she actually expressed her intention of spending an afternoon elsewhere, I experienced a strange undefined sense of misgiving. Yet there was nothing in the manner of her speech to suggest a doubt that she meant more than she had said. She spoke frankly and carelessly as usual. Nevertheless, that misgiving was on me the whole afternoon, and the long dark eyes of Armand de St. Felix looked at me strangely from the frescoes of San Clementi.

When I had returned with Mary and Eva from our expedition, I left them at the hotel to entertain their friends at tea, while I strolled into the grounds of the Villa Borghese to look for Ruby, who had not returned from her walk. It was a beautiful March evening, the air still and mild with the soft breath of an Italian spring. The violets were growing at my feet, lawful spoils for the *fioraie* who thronged the streets of a morning; the nightingales were singing in the stone-pines. It was all so fair, so sweet,

so calm, that I half began to blame myself for entertaining any suspicions of Ruby's motive for preferring a walk amid the works of Nature to the close confinement of the painting-gallery. The blue sky, the song-birds, the spring flowers, were just the very influences to appeal with full strength and deep truth to one light-hearted and happy as she. I turned aside from the carriage-drive up a foot-way where the ilexes nearly met over my head; then I suddenly emerged upon a wide space, where the grass and wild-flowers grew tall and rank, and where stone seats, half covered with moss and weeds, were ranged above each other in tiers as in an amphitheatre. It was a solitary spot enough, save for a distant view of the carriages rolling by; a few children were playing in the long grass, a German student walked up and down deep in some book, and not fifty yards distant, with their backs to me, two figures were sitting side by side. It required no second glance to convince me that they were Rubina Gascoigne and Armand de St. Felix.

Unknown to Ruby I had busied myself lately in trying to learn something about this young man. That his name was De St. Felix, and that he was a gentleman of birth who was glad to make a profit out of his artistic talent, I had ascertained to be the truth: beyond this I could gather but little information, and I very much doubted whether Ruby knew anything more of his history than I did.

How could she tell what sort of a reputation he held? how could she tell what the circumstances of his past life might have been? how could she even be certain whether he were married already or not? That he was deeply fascinated by her, I could well be-

lieve; but that he was ready to take a penniless girl for his wife, *he well born and poor*, was what I very much doubted. Having thought all this, with an anxious flutter at my heart, I stepped quietly up behind them, and laying my hand upon her shoulder, I said gently,

'Ruby!'

She started under my touch, and turned round with more embarrassment of look and manner than I had ever seen in her before; yet I fancied it arose less from the fact of my having found her in company with Armand de St. Felix than from a consciousness of not having treated me quite fairly in the matter. As for Armand, he turned on me a look expressive, pretty clearly, of the feelings with which he regarded this my second interference between him and Rubina.

'It is getting very late for you to be out,' I said; 'the sun is beginning to set; you have made me quite anxious.'

'Have I?' she answered, jumping up immediately. 'O, I am so sorry! You see I have only just finished my sketch.' And she pointed to it as it lay beside her on the grass.

I took it up; it was cleverly washed in, but by no means finished.

'You have not done so much as I should have expected in a whole afternoon,' I said coldly.

She coloured slightly as she took the drawing from me, but answered with her prettiest smile,

'You are not an artist, I'm afraid, Miss Campion, or you would have guessed that I had waited for the evening shadows before I began to colour.'

Meanwhile Monsieur de St. Felix had been lading himself with Ruby's camp-stool and the

rest of her sketching apparatus ; then turning to us, he said,

'If you will permit me, mesdames, I will do myself the honour of escorting you home.'

And as Ruby did not decline the offer, and I did not dare do so, he walked with us as far as the Piazza di Spagna.

But when at last we were rid of his company, and safe within our hotel, I drew Ruby into my own room, and nerved myself for the expostulation that my conscience told me was right, let it cost what it would. I was angry, and I think pardonably so ; I was angry at the deception she had practised upon me, provoked at the indiscretion of which she had been guilty, troubled for the future that might be before her. But I was puzzled how to act. Deeply interested in her though I was, with all the loving interest of a true friend, I yet had no right to pry into her affairs if she chose to keep them secret. Neither did I feel justified in laying the case before Mr. and Mrs. Gascoigne, for it seemed to me that, considering the conditions under which she lived with them, she was not more accountable to them in the matter of marriage than myself. But I was resolved to say something, and to let her know at least that I was both distressed and annoyed at what had happened ; I thought that emphatic plain speaking would tell with most effect.

'I don't like this way of going on, Ruby,' I said ; 'it is *not* right.'

I never knew Ruby out of temper ; she only shrugged up her shoulders now, as she answered,

'I know you mean very kindly, but why need you imagine all kinds of things ?'

'I don't imagine all kinds of things,' I said gravely, 'though I might almost be justified if I did.

But why can't you be honest with me ? Why can't you speak the truth ?'

'I have not spoken an untruth,' she said so gently that I almost repented of my plain speaking.

'Perhaps not,' I replied ; 'but you have not spoken the whole truth. Yes, you may tell me that I have no right to interfere with your affairs ; but I *have* a right—the right of a friend who has your interest very deeply at heart.'

She was silent a moment, and then she said, with her soft quiet smile,

'You must think me very senseless or very heartless, but I have been so little thought of by others—nobody cares what I do or what becomes of me ; I must take my chance, and it has always seemed to me quite natural—till I knew *you*.'

I was so deeply touched that I felt inclined to burst into tears, but restrained myself with a strong effort.

'And now you do know me you should treat me with more consideration,' I said, affecting a greater displeasure than I really felt. 'I care what becomes of you if nobody else does, and if you believe in my friendship you should spare me such misgivings as I have had to-day. I don't want to interfere between you and Monsieur de St. Felix ; but I *do* wish you never again to arrange a meeting with him which you think it desirable to keep secret from me. Looking at it purely from a selfish point of view it places *me* in a false position, as being in charge of your cousins, and to a certain extent responsible for you.'

Ruby had listened with downcast eyes and clasped hands and the sweetest air of penitence it is possible to imagine ; she was one of those people who are miserable

to think themselves objects of displeasure or in disgrace for a moment. She raised her soft eyes as I paused, and said, laying her hand on mine,

'Now you are angry with me, and I have been so very, very happy to-day.'

My darling, my sunbeam! I could not have resisted her pleading voice and her appealing gesture even had she committed something worse than an indiscretion.

'No, Ruby, child, I'm not angry,' I said; 'but you know I am a true friend, and you have heard what I ask; I won't say any more.'

'O, Monsieur de St. Felix is

such a true artist!' she exclaimed, reverting to the subject uppermost in her mind, now that the weight of my displeasure seemed removed. 'He enjoys every advantage that birth and position can give, and yet he has made up his mind to devote his whole life to his art.'

'And you have nothing more to tell me?' I asked after a pause.

'Ta-ta-ta!' she said, laughing, and kissing me; 'wait a bit, and you'll know enough in time. There, take my sketch of the Villa Borghese; please accept it—as a peace-offering.'

I *did* know enough, more than enough, in time; and I have her sketch of the Villa Borghese still.

(*To be continued.*)

PRINCESS CELANDINE'S SONG.

[*From 'King Marigold,' an unpublished operetta privately performed.*]

I NEVER saw his living face,
I never touched his hand;
I know not if his dwelling-place
Be earth or fancyland.

'Tis only in the world of dreams,
Where maiden's love is free,
That down a golden stair he seems
To come, and smile on me.

But ever with the waking day
He passes, like a breath;
Fain would I sleep my life away,
And dream myself to death!

Hast thou no waking life, my love?
Nay, surely, well I ween,
Through some fair Eden thou dost move
And seek thy Celandine!

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. IX.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

This ghost appears to mortal eye
Often in daylight in July.

I.

And these will yield it, as we're told
One did to Mantuan swain of old.

II.

While this proceeds with cheerful clatter
Of knife and fork and dish and platter.

III.

Mid scenes as fair to English ladies
As this to her who went to Hades.

IV.

His pipe perhaps may give the clue,
But any clergyman will do.

V.

The brewer's wife, poetic wight,—
But stay; the ghost is full in sight.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the August Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by July the 10th.

ANSWER TO No. VII. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

1. R H A M N U S
2. O R P A H
3. S T I N G O
4. E L B O W

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abelard, Aces, Acipenser, Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Arno, Aunt Charlotte, Beatrice W., Bon Gualtier, Brief, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cat & Kittens, Cats & Co., Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Dixie, Domino, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, Etak, Excelsior Jack, F. B. H., Frau Clebsch, General Buncombe, Gimlet-Eye, Gnat, Gogledd Cymru, Griselda, G. U. E., Half-and-Half, Hampton Courtier, Hazlewood, H. B., Heartie, Henricus, Hibernicus, Incoherent, Infra dig., Irene, Jack, Jessica, John o' Gaunt, Kanitbeko, K. C. Brighton, Kew, L. B., Leeks, Leona, Lizzie, Manus O'Toole, Mistress Maria & E. M. B. S., Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo, Murra, Newell, No Conjuror, Non sine gloria, Nunquam non paratus, O'Farrell, Old Log, Palmyra, Patty Probit, Penton, Pud, Puss, Racer, Respite finem, Rinola, Roe, Semie, Shaitan, Sir Hans Sloane, Sir Patrick Felis, Smashjavelin, Sootie, Spes, Tabitha, Tempus Fugit, The Borogoves, The Mad Tea-party, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Thunder, Too Late, Tory, Try, Tweedledum, Verulam, Welsh Rabbit, Ximena, and Yours truly—101 correct, and 3 incorrect: 104 in all.

Acrostic No. VIII. appears in the Holiday Number of *London Society*, published on July 1st.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Etak.—'Emen' cannot be accepted as an answer for light 2 of No. VI.

Aces cannot be credited with a correct answer to No. V.

Senga is referred to *Hamlet*, act i. sc. 4: 'It is a nipping and an eager air.' Your reading of the first couplet is not correct: *you may 'do this' to others.*

General Buncombe.—'Roe' of a fish comes from the sea, bay, &c.; 'Roe' (the deer) goes over the hills, &c. 'Roke' is a purely local word, and doubtless it would have been referred to as such in the descriptive couplet had that word been intended for the answer. The large number (fifty-eight) who sent in 'Roe' without any alternatives, and therefore without, apparently, any doubt of its accuracy, of itself fully justifies the Acrostic Editor in rejecting all other words.

LONDON SOCIETY.

AUGUST 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XIX.

TURNING A POINT.

THE sun bursting in through the thin white-dimity curtains woke Cressida suddenly to the knowledge of a hateful duty coming on her as surely as the dawn; something repugnant every way, and something that would not wait. The sense of such a pending ordeal, so far from vanishing during sleep, often seems doubly irksome the while, with the confusing complications of thought put by.

All night long the consciousness had never left her that the next morning she would have to intimate to Joe that on no consideration whatever were they to put themselves under any sort of obligation to Alec de Saumarez; that for the present she desired to avoid any avoidable *rapprochement* or renewal of relations in that quarter. So much was due to herself, no less than to Joe. Feminine rightness of feeling left her no choice.

Then would come her reasons. How foolish, how flimsy they would appear; or else how self-condemnatory! Here was a chapter of her life she had meant to rub out, keeping the true history

of a caprice, for which she had already paid dear, she considered, far from Joe's thoughts, cancelling it privately to herself and trusting to Fortune to keep her path and Alec's from meeting, at least until the past had lost its lurking sweetness, and, with that, its sting. It was deplorable to have to rake it all up again just now, and—there was the worst—to lower herself in Joe's eyes by such an acknowledgment of coquetry on the one hand and insincerity on the other as hers, looking it frankly in the face, did amount to. How she wished now she had been fair and open with Joe at the first; instead of contriving, too successfully, by a simple process of mental reservation, to put her seal on his assumption that, whichever of her lovers might have raised some echo in her heart, Alec, as was rightful, had been met there with complete laughing indifference, and treated accordingly!

The task before her of undeceiving him now was a thankless and a serious one. Still Joe would understand; Joe was not dense, neither fortunately, on the other hand, had he an imagination likely to run away with him. He would

see at once that it was a nicety of feeling on her part ; perhaps, since she was likely to make very light of everything in her recital, think it overstrained, but in any case respect it devoutly ; and Alec would be told, with best thanks, to go to the devil with his cash.

So their chance must go to the devil, too ; the turn of the tide be put off indefinitely, and the process of waiting and hoping and being disappointed begin over again.

Morning light had brought these matters of fact into prominence again, and Joe, all breakfast-time, ceased not to harp perseveringly upon them. Cressida's efforts to understand business were rarely successful ; she had almost ceased to make them, and Joe to perplex her further by his bungling attempts at making things plain. But so much he managed to make unfortunately clear, that the benefit accruing to them from this immediate friendly agreement could hardly fail to be very great indeed. He had always stuck to it that to save time was a grand point. Tom's liabilities were a quicksand, in which every step you made, unless it cleared you, sank you deeper in the mire. Freed from such ruinous entanglements, and with the necessary capital for working the estate put at his disposal, and on favourable terms, he could look forward with tolerable certainty to the distinct and rapid bettering of their fortunes. He went on painting those results to her in the most glowing colours, till Cressida asked herself in desperation why, if he *was* so delighted with the proposed partnership, had he not settled it all offhand without referring to her ? Did she wish she did not know so well that a word from her at this juncture would suffice to deter

him ? Never, alas, had the picture of quick and easy rehabilitation of their affairs seemed so tempting as now, when it was suddenly held up for her to look at within arm's length, and inner, finer impulses were forbidding her hand to take it.

If she said nothing, he would take her acquiescence and approval for granted, of course. So she began—light symptom of yielding—with a few vague general objections. Did Alec, who was notoriously careless about money, know what he was doing ? Was it advisable to incur so vast an obligation to a single individual ; and that too an acquaintance with whom they were not likely to care to be drawn into very close connection ? Was it so absolutely sure that the contract was a wise and fair one for both parties ? Joe had great pleasure in swiftly and triumphantly clearing away these supposititious lions from the path ; an easy task. Meanwhile Cressida was mentally reasoning down her own genuine motives for reluctance, till they were being rapidly reduced to the semblance of sentimental shadows.

The partnership, the idea of which had come on her first like a shock, and revolted her still, was a matter of business merely, of signatures interchanged between two men ; the debtor and creditor relation to last only for a few years, more or less, according to circumstances. A formal transaction, with which she had nothing in the world to do. There was not the slightest necessity for its involving them in future relations with Alec, personally ; he had really shown no inclination that way, and was going back to Ireland immediately.

As for the obligation, it was a creation of her squeamish fancy. De Saumarez, as Joe had con-

clusively proved to her over and over again, would emphatically not be the loser by the transaction, and he could perfectly afford to risk having to wait a little for his share of profit. Thus, as Cressida rightly divined, Alec had drifted into it readily and without second thoughts, simply because it was a matter of little or no account to him at the moment. But for Joe and herself this was the chance *par excellence*, and we all know that those who won't grasp their opportunity in this world when it offers, because of this, that, or the other, will ever be passed by in the race of life. Really her scruples are chimerical when she comes to analyse the grounds of them, mere matters of feeling, at which she may laugh.

'I sha'n't see you again, I suppose,' said Joe, as at last he pushed away his cup and saucer, and rose from the table, where for the last ten minutes Cressida had been ingeniously contriving to detain him by every trifling question or remark she could think of, an unquenchable reluctance lingering still. 'I'm off on my rounds now, and shall go straight away then to the station. I'm to meet De Saumarez at the club at four.'

'You've an appointment with him, then?'

'Yes; I sha'n't get back till the late train, same as last night.'

'Stop, you haven't got your gloves. Wait while I fetch them.'

'Make haste!' shouted Joe; but she walked up-stairs very leisurely, whilst he fidgeted below, fretting with impatience to be off. What was the reason she would always make him take gloves? She *knew* he never put them on! As Cressida went down she came to a dead stop on the landing, still halting between two opinions. Then suddenly it

dawned upon her that it was too late to palter and question. The favourable hour for action was gone by. To come out with an insuperable obstacle thus at the last moment would create a mystery, give false and needless importance to hollow by-gones. Why such unwillingness to speak? would be asked. Her confidence could hardly come gracefully now.

'Look sharp, look sharp!' again Joe's voice of imploring restlessness was heard from below. She ran down. Decidedly it was too late to interfere. She had taken her part, and what behoves her now is to look to its justification afterwards.

So she let him depart, and stood at the window following him with her eyes till he was out of sight.

Then she whirled round quickly, struck a pretty little half-theatrical attitude, in jest, and laughed.

'Cressida,' she addressed herself aloud, 'this is too absurd. You are getting superstitious.'

But if there was dismay at the thought of what she had done, or rather not prevented, there was also the self-congratulatory feeling behind of one who has shirked payment of a score.

As to looking back, it would be simply foolish. She can't revoke, so why repent? If she likes to feast her eyes on the stately woods and shapely walls and mullioned windows of Monks' Orchard for the rest of the day, she may do so in the good hope that these will shortly become her house and home in something more than in name.

Instead, she shut out the pleasing picture resolutely, and, as it were to set herself an example of how admirable her future behaviour as Lady of the Manor should be, she spent the morning as a

good housekeeper should, and the afternoon in visiting all the sick people in the village.

It helped to ease her conscience before Joe returned, which he duly did, in rampant spirits. His news was told in fragmentary phrases over his supper, to which he brought a ravenous hunger. All promised well. Alec had been everything that was most pleasant and gentlemanly. He did not seem to care sixpence about the business, observed Joe; had gone over some matters for form's sake, but was much more taken up with a polo-match in which he was going to play.

Such was the gist of his communications, given in snatches, divided as he was between a clamorous appetite and an almost equally clamorous eagerness to expatiate on his plans.

'I say, guess whom I met in town?' he began suddenly, both longings having been partially appeased, and as he was giving the *coup de grâce* to his second chop.

'Well?' His peculiar tone made her peculiarly inquisitive.

'Stephen Halliday.' Joe was very busy with his knife and fork, and did not look up, but the name had only called forth a faint smile that faded all of a sudden as a highly unwelcome probability suggested itself.

'You didn't—I mean, did you talk to him at all about this?' she asked hesitatingly—'tell him of our difficulties, and so on?'

'Not I,' quoth Joe comfortably, with his mouth full; 'they're no concern of his, nor likely to have the slightest interest for him, I should say.'

Cressida felt considerably relieved. Ah, there was self-condemnation in that intuitive movement, the sense that she would give the world for Halliday never to know of this.

'No,' resumed Joe; 'we had that other subject of conversation.'

Cressida looked at him inquiringly, saying, 'Seacombe?' and Joe nodded. 'Is there any news?' she ventured timidly.

Joe waited before replying till he had quite demolished his second course, and then came out with the remark that he had been preparing meanwhile.

'That fellow Halliday's a brick,' emphasising the statement by a violent dig into the cheese. 'He's going to Stoke Michael himself. He seems to have got rather thick with them there, and has offered himself to stay with Alleyne and let Miss Fan get away for a change.'

Cressida sighed, with mixed feelings.

'Now I own it's not the sort of thing I should have looked for him to do,' remarked Joe candidly. 'He's hard run with work, counts his holidays on his fingers, and has as good an eye to his own main chance as any fellow I ever knew. He's not well off, so one can't blame him for that; still that's about the last man I should expect to see put himself out to do a thing of the kind.'

'You didn't know him,' said Cressida simply.

But she had been very much taken by surprise herself, and fell to speculating wistfully on the march of events in a quarter of all others most sternly forbidden to her influence and observation. It put the other matter out of her head for the evening.

Halliday, in point of fact, was not so addicted to going out of his way to play the Good Samaritan but that his readiness to do so on this particular occasion was a thing he had remarked upon himself.

Although he had plenty of

human sympathy for his neighbours in their misfortunes, he never professed to be at the beck and call of every distressed individual he came across, for their service and relief. One cannot do everything. He had paid over his faculties to a line of life accounted useful, to work often dry and onerous enough, in all conscience—was doing his best, which chanced to be rather better than other people's, in his avocations, exerting himself for the good of his generation, according to his judgment, and had never needed his off-hours for freedom and relaxation so much as at this particular time.

For the last eighteen months—in other words, since his parting with Cressida—he seemed to himself to have broken more and more with the softer and softening influences of life. A love foregone. Well. You are the freer to compass your higher ambitions, to assert and enjoy intellectual supremacy, if you have it. He had plunged into the thick of the action, bringing to it, besides such natural advantages as an energetic versatile mind and an iron constitution, all the added motive-power of a rebound. Upon such, business and responsibilities of miscellaneous kinds crowd apace. Fresh paths are perpetually opening; fresh aims and ends start up to be considered; ground to be cleared; questions to be sifted; definite evils to be fought off; definite objects to be secured; and whatever he took up he now carried through with the zest of absolutely undivided attention. Elise de Saumarez could no longer have pointed him out as falling short of any expectations that had ever in his younger days been entertained of him.

He had his reward. Evidence

was perpetually coming to him, from all quarters, of the mark he might make—was making. Whatever he said, wrote, did, seemed to carry weight, often far beyond what he himself had attributed to it. It is the thought-leaders, after all, who are the real masters of the world in the age we live in, who dictate to our dictators. And when, to the simple power of superior knowledge, is added a touch of that more subtle, penetrative, personal agency of genius to which people submit without asking questions, there seems really no limit or measure for the authority and influence the fortunate owner, if he cares to take the trouble, may exercise. Halliday was well aware he was in a world perfectly ready to suck him dry, that asked nothing better than to get the greatest possible amount out of him and his attainments in the shortest possible time. Not a scrap of any sort of energy or ability in him but may be exhausted by the claims put upon it by importunate mankind without, and the ambitious self within.

He let them stimulate, let them absorb him. Other matters became like mere ripples on a vast stream. Much that could occupy, attract, and come home to him once upon a time was falling fast into utter paltriness and insignificance.

He was never a martinet, though, and such an exceptional feeling of interest as that which for some while past had been springing up in him for the brother and sister found room to grow. It had its germ in a sort of admiring compassion, for the latter at least, excited on the occasion of his first visit to them at Stoke Michael, and which, during the three weeks following that he and Lefroy had spent in the neighbourhood, visit-

ing them pretty regularly, had taken hold of him far more forcibly than he had anticipated.

Fresh from a workaday world steeped in self-seeking, if not in selfishness, in common if not in sordid aims, Halliday, though not tainted by the climate he lived in, had suffered its effect. He had his moments of disgust, for instance, moments when he was driven to wonder whether the generous emotions are not being rapidly selected out of existence, to vanish for a generation or two at the least. There was something hardening in all this—a result of the overdoses of experience crowded modern life thrusts upon us—and though he would not have owned it, he stood very much in need of moral refreshment.

The simple incident that here had come in his way had done him service. He liked to turn now and then to dwell on a picture which, however sad in itself, had its brighter touches, if but as a silent token that unselfish affection and self-devotion are not dead, though more and more pushed out of notice in a short-sighted age.

In Norbert himself he must perceive a noble mind, overthrown, perhaps past rescue, by crushed health, but that had never been corrupted or warped. Had this been otherwise, though Fan's behaviour to him were that of a saint, it would not have been so pleasant to contemplate as now when the tie between them was the affinity of one pure, generous, gentle-hearted nature for another, and her self-sacrifice the intuitive response to an unspoken call; the loyalty that impels the noble soul to stand by its fellow.

The impression on Halliday had proved no mere passing one, and he had made a point of keep-

ing up communication of one kind or another with them ever since. Upon his return to London he set himself to consider what he could do for the girl from there, in the way of unobtrusive friendship.

He could write letters that would make a break on the monotony of her seclusion, remember to take note of anything that was specially likely to interest her to hear, lend her books and so forth. O, there are countless little services clever educated heads have it in them to render, and that mere good-will fails to accomplish or even to hit upon, from want of thought or understanding or imagination. Thus he had done his best these last months in such practical ways as suggested themselves.

Again, from the first, a noticeable fact had been the singularly agreeable and tranquillising power his presence and conversation seemed to exercise over Norbert. Halliday had remarked this himself, long before Fan, one day, in thanking him for coming, had alluded to it, observing that her brother was always better for having him there, had appeared to take to him from the first moment, and to feel now as at home with him as with herself, far more than with his old friend Mr. Lefroy, for instance.

It was no miracle. Halliday's strong but exceptionally well-ballasted nature was accurately reflected by his exterior and demeanour. His firm voice, self-possessed manner, quiet decisive mode of expressing himself, all helped to give something to his society that acted on morbidly acute nerves like a direct, palpable emanation, at once soothing and restraining, both lending a sense of support and imparting a little of its own repose and self-command.

So together with the will to help them, since worthy of helping he counted them to be, here had the opportunity of rendering a positive service been put into his hands. He could do anything with Norbert, Fan had said, and when to the girl's despair there had arisen a great doubt as to whether her own strength might not break down under this oppressive taxing round of life, and Halliday, on hearing of this, had offered to come and take her place for a time, it was because he knew not merely that she would have exceptional confidence in his tact and management, but that perhaps he was the person she could best hope might really make up to Norbert for her absence.

It would be doing her a genuine kindness, and he did not hesitate, though it forced him to put aside one or two other plans on which he had rather set his heart.

Admirable as Fan's patience and disinterestedness had always appeared to him, they were now destined to become much more so in his eyes after trying to emulate them. He had undertaken that she should not be missed if he could help it, and fulfilled his part very well, but got heartily tired of the tedious task long before it was over. Now and then it set him pondering on certain moral problems.

Suppose Norbert were never to recover, was it this girl's bounden duty, from the age of eighteen upwards, to bury herself alive thus; to go on, hoping against hope, till her youth and health were spent? Halliday would most emphatically have answered, No.

But would she ever consent to see that she was in no way bound to persevere in the sacrifice when it became manifestly hopeless? Would she even consent to recognise on due evidence that hopeless

it was? He feared not; but thought that she ought.

In the case of ninety-nine women out of a hundred the matter would hardly have struck him in so strong a light. But the sum of his impressions, from all that he had seen of the girl, was leading him on to the conviction that she was too good to throw away her life thus, too valuable a character, both for head and heart, for it to be right for her to exhaust these, as she was doing now, on a barren labour of love and pity.

And when Fan, her leave of absence over, returned to Stoke Michael as well and strong as ever, and Halliday, nothing loth, was set free to go back to his own avocations, leaving her to hers, he carried away with him the strongest and vividest possible impression on the subject. He would recall her as she had looked when she wished him good-bye at the door, and he, glancing back from up the lane, had seen her still standing there, in all the charm of her fresh, sound youth, with her nut-brown hair, rosy cheeks, clear single-hearted blue eyes, and tranquil resolute little face. Then he would say to himself that such abnegation was worthy of all praise of course; but that this young thing, to whom it seemed to come so easily, who had borne so much without flinching or losing her head, nor yet growing hardened or flippant, showing herself so capable, and yet so simple and unpretending—well, though such a one no doubt would make the best possible ministering angel to the weak, her rightful place must rather be that of comrade to the strong, since few could be so fitted to share the interests, lighten the cares, and join the stirring fortunes of a man forward in the ranks of active life.

'Of yourself, do you mean?'

asked a secret voice. He found it not so easy to answer. Such an idea brought no change, no revolution of thought or disturbance of feeling with it. He and such a girl were allies, whether they joined forces and destinies or not. They had thus become acquainted easily, freemason fashion, by virtue of the community of moral feeling between them; a similarity in essentials that makes itself felt throughout the vastest differences of age, culture, and experience. Fan was neither a beauty, nor a grace, nor a muse; but simply a brave little soul silently ranging herself in the ranks of those whose standards, which they carry in themselves and cannot desert, mark them out as servants of truth and lovers of good, yet with no taste whatever for sitting idle either among laughing or crying philosophers.

She, on her part, seemed to value his friendship and friendly aid, responding readily and unaffectedly. Her old prejudice was not proof against his kindness to her brother, and had fallen helplessly before the first symptom shown. A good understanding had thus established itself quietly and was growing fast. At the outset their connection had had Norbert for a link. How now if that link should one day become a block, that Halliday should be using his powers of inducement to make her put aside?

Already he must ask himself from time to time whether—by perpetually drawing off her attention and interest to various topics, keeping it alive in some, creating it in others, and ever holding up before her the picture of that busy useful life that appealed to her liking above all things as he had discovered—he were not doing his best to detach her from her brother, to disgust her with these months

upon months of semi-inertia, retirement, and tedium. The wider the vista he opened up to her, the narrower her present boundaries would seem.

Well, he thought he was justified even in this—reflecting that if the worst did come to the worst, and in course of time it became evident that she was immolating herself to no practical purpose, it would be the right thing to advise her to relinquish the task. At present not only was Norbert's future past foretelling, but Fan's new friend was far from being at one with his own mind, which, though calm on the surface, had depths that, when sounded, betrayed ground still heaving underneath.

Cressida—It was dangerous to fall from your first estate in Stephen Halliday's estimation. Clever she or he who could regain ground once lost there. Cressida's overthrow had been signal and decisive. Yet it would seem as though in her downfall she, as in revenge, had caught and carried away with her something that was part of himself—a fragment from out of his soul, which he would hardly see again, but whose loss left him imperfect—fated so to be, and to know it evermore.

Who knows the fantastic fable of the poet, whose beauteous but frail ideal, *Benedicta*, soon faded, died, and was buried—buried by his own hands one spring day in a bier of some sweet-scented and imperishable wood, fast closed and hermetically sealed? And as he stood still with his eyes fixed upon it, there rose up before him an apparition with a startling likeness to the departed one, who trampled on the fresh earth, and laughed at him, saying, 'It is I, your good for nothing *Benedicta*. And the penalty of your folly is this, that you shall love me just as I am.'

But he cried 'No!' and 'Never!' indignantly, stamping on the grave to emphasise his denial, and with such violence that the ground gave way under his foot, which sank deep into the newly-dug sepulchre; and there behold him, like a wolf caught in a trap, held fast, perhaps for ever, to the grave of his ideal.

Halliday, it appeared, had not extricated himself any better. There were little memories connected with her, mere trivialities, still holding a charm he found nowhere else in his existence. It irked him at times as a despicable weakness. But at others his whole past conduct in that matter would appear to him in a changed distorted light as a monstrous mistake—soul-suicide. Moments came when a face looked over his shoulder and laughed at him, and a feeling seized him that, if only the choice were his, joyfully would he throw down the whole of that brilliant future of successful achievement within his compass, only to have her there again to love him, as she might if he had let her. That was madness, of course. But perhaps the worst of all was the sane conviction that such a superlative feeling of heart-surrender should have a lie for its foundation.

He would wonder at such times how it fared with Benedicta now. He heard chance news of her repeatedly, always to much the same effect, that she and her husband were living very quietly, very happily, everybody said. Was this marriage, for which he had found only two motives,—both of a low order,—on her part to assign—pique and love of wealth—vindicating itself? Was her better nature coming out, to triumph finally, to the confusion of those who presumed to doubt its reality?

It was a question that Cressida

also put to herself from time to time.

CHAPTER XX.

SHADOWS.

'TELL me now, am I not a model *fermière*?'

'Model what?' muttered Joe indistinctly.

He had come in two hours before dinner-time, and was fast sinking to sleep before the fire, getting every moment briefer and more fitful in his responses to Cressida, who, in one of her light, talkative moods, went rippling on, about every subject that entered her head.

She repeated her question. He just roused himself to reply, without unclosing his eyes,

'Not quite. You won't wear big thick boots.'

'Well, I own I do cling to one or two old prejudices,' said Cressida, with animation; 'I don't want to disguise myself too painfully and successfully as a clumsy, ugly, country production.'

'A hit at my corduroys, eh?' put in Joe, smiling in his sleep.

'Would you have me turn myself into an Audrey?'

'An Audrey? what on earth is that?'

'O Joe!' despairingly; 'are you going to tell me you have never read Shakespeare—*As You Like It*?'

'Never,' replied Joe complacently, but so drowsily that Cressida abandoned the dialogue, and in two minutes more her lord slept the sleep of the just.

Cressida sighed and went on awhile with her fine-art needlework, to the accompaniment of the ticking of the clock. As Joe sank deeper and deeper into unconsciousness, Cressida seemed to grow more and more perversely wakeful, her brain more clear and

active; her thoughts and ideas succeeding each other rapidly and pointedly, agitating, as it were, for some outward vent. Had she been a poet or musician she would have sat down to extemporise verses or songs forthwith, but her right hand had no cunning of that sort.

Presently she rose, went to the window, and stood looking out. It was dark, and she could barely distinguish the swaying forms of the trees.

Memory and forethought do not always bring blessings and wisdom with them. At times one feels as if one might at least act better and more wisely if they could be got rid of.

So with Cressida, when something would bring back vividly on her mind past passages of her life with a wild passionate feeling of regret, as for lost treasures. In harbouring these thoughts she would not have felt as if she were false of heart. There had been no romance about her marriage. Joe had never presupposed any high-flown sentiment on her side. Why, he was ready to swear that he hated romance, thought it all 'boosh,' never recognising how much of this said 'boosh' entered into his affection for his wife. On her part she was fonder of him now than ever before. Insensibly their life together seemed to have extended back—it was as if she had always known him, always had him at her side to participate in whatever of good or of ill should befall her. His own history, with which she felt as familiar as with her own, was simple as himself, as easy to read and take in as the ins and outs of that good, honest temperament, overflowing with healthy vitality and animal spirits. His devotion was nice and pleasant, and she was learning to take it for granted, as a child might a father's or mother's love, approv-

ing it, becoming daily more dependent on it, forgetful from hour to hour that it is the stuff out of which her life is weaving itself—a fair life, too, if she will not spoil it, but so plain-seeming that she thinks she can gauge it exactly, and the joys it will allow her, and that it never will. It had its wrong side. There were points where his nature and hers could never meet. The higher interests, the finer pleasures of life, were sealed books to him. Now it was perhaps to the encouragement and development of these wider faculties of appreciation in herself, that she could best look to counteract the qualities required to be held in check. Intercourse with a mind upright as Joe's, but more, instead of less, comprehensive than hers, might have elevated her tone of thought sweetly, naturally, without self-constraint on her part, keeping before her a standard that forbade her to rest satisfied with anything but her own highest. Yet, for that dream at Almenwald, though she too had not broken with the recollection, for her it remained anything but a tender one. The old bond between them had been snapped too rudely, and she liked to persuade herself there was nothing *there* to regret. Joe, lazy and uncritical, was not so hard a master, and so far suited her liking better. She was aware that he spoilt her. It was his way of atoning for deficiencies which he could not help, but of which he had some vague, uneasy consciousness. Another, though more widely and subtly responsive, would hardly have been so thoughtful for her, so tolerant of her humours, her little likes and dislikes, so generally indulgent, so careful that nothing but pleasant things should come in her way.

It is only that times will come, like the present, when all this is

sunk in a misprized, misappreciated feeling, the longing for sympathetic meeting half way, and gratification generally, from parts of her nature that lay beyond Joe's understanding. He might admire them, inasmuch as they helped to make her what she was; but how should he go further, not having a vestige of such qualities in himself? She must see and take life as it is.

Imperfect. Well. Did she not long ago forfeit something like perfection for herself? She does not deplore that, she would swear. Yet it is perhaps a latent sense of loss—loss of the true—that underlies this unrest, tempting her to hark back on the false; to go seeking a fugitive happiness in things that may mar for her the path she has accepted; the path where, deceive herself how she may, her main lot and real life lie now.

Will her good angel, whose voice has failed again and again to keep her from setting aside her more generous impulses to snatch at present ease and advantage, speak now and be heard?

The sudden arrival of the post awoke Joe from his nap and his wife from her reverie simultaneously. Cressida had not moved from the window, where she stood occupied by her correspondence, when Joe began from the other end of the room,

'I say, I've got a letter from—guess now.'

'From Elise de Saumarez,' she said, glancing up quickly, recognising the hand from a distance.

'Such a jolly letter!' Joe continued. Finding the greatest difficulty himself in stringing words into writable sentences, and sentences into any sort of sequence, in all fluent correspondents he saw the most gifted of mortals. 'Now what do you suppose she wants?'

'I've no idea,' said Cressida, but catching a faint, vague apprehension of something vexatious impending.

'Wants to know if I'll let her have Monks' Orchard—be her landlord, as she puts it—for the summer and autumn.'

Cressida looked up, as if about to speak, checked herself, and stood silent with compressed lips.

'She says I may name my own terms,' he continued; 'and it's the first offer we've had. She seems to fear that we mayn't fancy having any one there but ourselves, since we can't keep up the place—something like the dog in the manger. Better read it yourself.'

Cressida took a long time reading it; then folded it up deliberately, seeming to reflect.

'It wouldn't be very pleasant having *anybody* there, would it?' she suggested.

'Well, no; but I'm not proud,' said Kennedy, laughing; 'and I think we ought to let it, if we can. We made up our minds to that at first.'

'Yes; but now that all is going on so well, and that we hope to get there so soon ourselves, you said, and I hoped, it mightn't be necessary.'

Joe fidgeted uneasily.

'Not necessary, but it's to our advantage as far as it goes. I don't see why we should mind. It isn't even as though we had started there ourselves, and had to come down in the world, as a man may say. I'm better off now, take things at the worst, than ever I was, or thought to be, two years ago. So one can't feel touchy on that score.'

Cressida said they would talk it over after dinner, which they did, she bringing forward every objection she could think of, Joe arguing them away.

'The fact is,' he said at length, suddenly coming to the point, 'I don't see very well how we *can* refuse. She puts it rather as a favour, and after the helping hand I got from Master Alec myself, I don't half like to be disobliging in that quarter. She fancies the place suits her health, and so on.'

Cressida said nothing. Joe went meandering on:

'It's natural she wants to come back, like a bird to the old nest, she says. Now, if we are to put anybody there, I don't know where you'd find a more agreeable neighbour. Having her won't be the same as having a stranger—more like asking a visitor, vacating our own domain in her favour and camping out, eh?'

Cressida still remained silent. But Joe must perceive her evident reluctance. He saw there a rather foolish pride, and meant to coax her out of it.

'You used to like her,' he remarked, 'if I remember right. I'm sure there couldn't be jollier company than she makes.'

Cressida smiled faintly.

'O yes, a capital talker.'

'You'd never be dull, and I shouldn't feel as if I were leaving you to be lonely when I'm out and busy, as I expect I shall be more and more as the season gets on. O, I know you'd like it when it came to pass,' he added knowingly. 'Now can you bring forward a single reasonable objection?'

Not one, it seemed.

'Well, then, I think that really we must let her have her way in this matter, and you must let me have mine,' he persisted. 'I understand very well what you mean—a little bit of pride; but I think you and I are rather bound to pocket it in this instance, as these people ask us.'

'Why?' said Cressida, firing up.

'Well, to put it plain,' said Joe

bluntly, 'that if I'm not ashamed to make the son useful to me—and he has helped me out of a pernicious bother—this isn't the time for me to hold my head so high as to be unneighbourly to the mother, when my turn comes.'

Cressida stood looking more doubtful than ever, and with downcast eyes. For one moment she did long, long with her whole soul, to reverse her life's policy, and think only of making the best reparation in her power by a frank acknowledgment of how she had falsified things to him. But the matter was seriously complicated now; and in a way she stood more committed than ever to making naught of all she had kept back.

'Well,' she said at length, helplessly, with a sigh, 'if we must.'

'All right, then,' fell in Joe promptly; 'and as she begs she may have an answer immediate—underlined—I'll set about it this very night; write and tell her she may make her arrangements, and welcome, and come next week, if she chooses. Luckily I'm not so sleepy as usual; so here goes.'

And forthwith he sat down to indite. It was a long job, and for a while no sound was heard but the scratching of a pen in difficulties. Cressida sat near him at her work. Now that the thing was decided she was already more than half reconciled to it and to herself. It was not at all what she had intended to happen, but in her mood to-night she saw there some attractions. It would not be bad fun if Monks' Orchard woke up a little. Some day or other she must have met Elise again, she reflected—Alec too, though for that matter it was improbable he should care to come down. If anything brought him it would be of no consequence—all would be different. Thus her

thoughts ran on as she sat, from time to time appealed to by her husband for advice as to the spelling of a word.

'Why, you're worse than my Fernswold school-children used to be,' she said at last, laughing.

Kennedy smiled good-humouredly. There were days, he admitted, when he could not spell anything, but he was not in the least sensitive on the point. It was a chronic complaint which it were vain to try and eradicate. Superfluous too. For what, after all, did it matter, so long as you made yourself understood?

'There,' he sighed, with triumph, as, after a laborious half-hour, he completed the composition, "'Yours truly, H. Kennedy.'" Any message, *Cressida*?

'Tell her that I shall look forward to the pleasure of playing Chloe to her Lady Amaryliss.'

Joe groaned, and bit the end of his quill.

'I wish you'd said something simple and short.'

'Shorter than that? Why?'

'Because I should know how to spell it.'

'Send my love, then,' said *Cressida*, glancing over his shoulder; 'but perhaps you don't know how to spell that.'

Kennedy's answer, which was not verbal, appeared to be conclusive on that point.

The next day, Stephen Halliday was calling on Mrs. de Saumarez.

The last two years had slipped by over Elise's head and left it unaltered, quite. Life amused her still, as a game of skill indefinitely protracted, but of which she did not see why she should ever get tired. Each turn of the wheel brought fresh combinations, petty aims, diversions, and curious interests into her self-centred

but ever-varying existence. New sets of people came on her stage, strutted their hour, and went off again; never missed, since their exit was brought about gradually—a process of being superseded by others. Only her acquaintance with Stephen Halliday, though of old standing, was one she would fain have made to last. He was not so easy to replace, and it was with peculiar mortification that she had seen him become remiss in his visits to her lately.

Elise, though not learned—perhaps all the more on that account—was the pink of literary advisers, and had once prided herself on being his critic in chief. For years past he had been used to consult her judgment; and this was the whole origin of their intercourse. A shrewd clever woman of the world, who knows a little—though a very little—of everything, preserves that fine eye for generalities, which the tremendous inequality of knowledge, following on much special study, is so apt to impair. Elise knew he valued her advice, and the idea of being possibly superseded herself on *his* stage roused a secret jealousy in her, of which he was happily unconscious.

'You are the very person I was thinking of when the door opened,' she said candidly, 'but the last one I expected to walk in. One has seen so little of you lately that my imagination had begun to indulge in all sorts of conjectures. When a man like you hides himself for a time, the next thing always is for him to startle everybody by coming out in some new character.'

Halliday observed he was sorry to disappoint her; but saw no prospect of startling anybody just at present, least of all, herself.

'I heard of you, though,' she continued, 'down with those poor

people at Seacombe. Lewis Le-froy tells me everything. Do you know you deserve a medal, and if I were president of the Royal Humane Society you should have one.'

'O, nonsense,' said Halliday, rather impatiently; embarrassed, as man is, by praise of this sort.

'Indeed you must allow me to admire you,' persisted Elise, unabashed, 'and to say so. Perhaps you will forgive me when I tell you that I can sooner fancy myself blossoming into a saint or a martyr than coming out as a sister of charity or a hospital nurse. That is a development to which I never could attain, so I naturally revere it in others.'

'Miss Alleyne lives there entirely,' returned Halliday briefly.

'Ah, a relation; that is different. I suppose somebody must. But what a lamentable affair that was altogether!'

'Very,' he agreed.

'It seems,' she continued cheerfully, 'that the community have suffered a loss in that young fellow few of them are aware of. My old friend Sir Francis Matthi-son was here the other day, and became quite eloquent on the subject. He had heard him play, seen his compositions, and declares there was a first-rate genius spoilt in him, and that never, in this unmusical nation, has he, in the whole course of his professorial experience, met with an instance of so remarkable a natural gift.'

'One hears the same of him everywhere,' said Halliday. Somehow, since Norbert's illness, individual opinion had become much more decided, or rather more outspoken, on the subject of his talents.

'Poor Cressida!' said Elise contemplatively. 'They say it has all been a great grief to her. Still it is a mercy that that affair

came to nothing. And I must say she managed most cleverly to make a tolerable match, notwithstanding. It was a very happy thought, that marriage.'

'For some people,' he said.

'O, I meant for the parties concerned,' explained Elise, with seeming innocence, 'though, poor thing, her troubles soon began again. She seems born to disappointment, or be disappointed.'

'Disappointed?'

'Not in the man this time, but in the money,' replied Elise, laughing. 'Of course you heard that her final speculation turned out a shade less brilliant than was expected. Dreadful things came to light—when it was too late in the day—about the cousin, who had been doing his best to beggar the Kennedys ever after, and had the cunning to keep it from everybody.'

'I heard something of it,' said Halliday. 'People said Mr. Kennedy would have to give up the place. He's farming it down there now, isn't he? in hope of making it pay?'

'Yes, plenty of hope,' returned Elise facetiously. 'I think they might have gone on living on hope for a long time, and grown thin upon it, but for a certain friend of ours. However, now they have contrived to clear off the worst embarrassments they are above water again. Alec tells me the prospect is very good.'

Halliday looked up.

'O, I forgot,' said Elise. 'Well, it's a private affair, but I suppose I may tell you, between ourselves, that, some while ago, Mr. Kennedy, when on the look-out for some one with funds to go shares with him in working the estate, happened to apply to Alec, who, as you know, has inherited lately, and who lent him what he wanted to set things going.'

'De Saumarez has?' asked Halliday, with a peculiar intonation.

'Yes,' she said. 'Alec of course knows no more of farming than of geology, and merely appears as banker in the affair. He is thoughtlessness itself in such matters. But I have no fears of his having to repent this friendly financial speculation. Joe Kennedy in matters of business is as steady and cautious and clear-headed as his cousin was headlong and slippery; though it was of course a great boon to him at the time to find a friend in need.'

Halliday, staggered somehow by what he heard, was thinking to himself that, even in need, people may, or should, pick and choose their friends.

'Pray what does Mrs. Kennedy think of all this?' he asked; 'how, I mean, does she take to their present position?'

'Can you not guess?' said Elise maliciously. 'You knew her, so it is really not difficult. I believe she was in great despair at the prospect of living on, under a cloud, as at present, and no wonder. They have had to come down to very humble style, cannot go out or receive people, and she had set her heart on reigning at Monks' Orchard. It is a very charming place, and no one can blame her if she felt their circumstances painfully. I think Mr. Kennedy was more distressed about it on her account than his own. He is her blind, devoted slave, and so long as she is there for him to look at when he comes in, the rest is secondary. But Cressida is born to be the adornment of a rich man's home, and is perfectly aware of it. I imagine this last arrangement has been a great weight off her mind.'

'No doubt,' returned Halliday.

'I'm hoping to see them very soon,' she continued presently. 'I

ventured to propose myself to Mr. Kennedy as a tenant for Monks' Orchard, and have just received a favourable answer from him; so you are just in time to receive my first invitation. Will you be my guest there next month? You know you command your own time.'

'I have unfortunately none to dispose of just now,' he replied. In vain she pressed him; he would not promise. He had never received her invitations so little cordially before. Elise was piqued; the engagements he pleaded went for nothing; he found time enough, she remarked to herself, to go down to Seacombe. His manner at this moment puzzled her; it was brusque and constrained, and she felt more and more convinced some matter of consequence was preoccupying him.

'You are very mysterious,' she said, in a tone of surprise, 'and you look so grave. I believe you do mean to startle us, say what you like,' she added playfully.

'There is no mystery,' returned Halliday. He went on to explain to her that for the present his plans were unsettled. He had thoughts of applying for a professorship in Scotland, to be vacant shortly, and which appointment, if he obtained it, would take him away from London permanently. But his mind was not made up, he owned. All was in doubt; depended on circumstances.

Elise's curiosity was not appeased. He spoke oddly and hesitatingly. So much vagueness and indecision were very unlike him.

'That would be a change certainly,' she said gravely, 'and changes of that sort often lead on to more, and greater.'

'Very true.'

His tone perplexed her; she looked at him experimentally, and

then ventured—their old acquaintance warranted the question—

‘You are not thinking of—marrying?’

‘Of marrying in general or marrying in particular?’

‘In general,’ said Elise considerably.

He was silent a moment, then said,

‘Yes.’

Elise had expected a denial, and felt rather posed. She saw in his face that she would not get him to be more explicit.

‘Well, perhaps you are right,’ she said judiciously, after a pause; ‘it’s an experience *comme une autre*, and that everybody will make, as they go down the coal-mine, just to say they have been there.’

Halliday laughed outright.

‘I quite understand your reluctance to come to Monks’ Orchard now,’ continued Elise maliciously. ‘There is nothing, when one is on the eve of a good resolution, so dangerous as by-gones.’

‘I won’t contradict you,’ he returned; ‘but to prove how wrong you are, should anything take me into the neighbourhood of Lullington before the summer, which is possible, I will let you know, and shall be happy to come and see you, and meet any by-gones you please.’

‘What has come to him?’ thought Elise, puzzled, when he was gone; ‘he’s not himself at all.’

Not for the last half hour.

Halliday felt obliged to Elise for what she had told him. Unwittingly she had done him good service. Had he needed more confirmation that Cressida was pursuing, and would continue to pursue, the old tack? Bent then on not redeeming her past in the present. She might live honoured and beloved, or she might not, according as harmlessness or mis-

chief might chance to present itself as easy and pleasant—just as a false coin may circulate long without detection or any one being the loser thereby; only should it accidentally come to be tested, then, how will the ring of the true metal be found wanting! The worse for those who accepted it at its own valuation. He had wrenched away his last limb from the grave of his love. It had given him pain—how much, was his secret; but he felt freer now, as by a sort of reaction the current of his thoughts set more steadily in the reverse direction.

Your romance has ended pitifully; the loveliness that beguiled you has lost its power, may move heaven and earth by its witchery, but will never move you again, because you have detected in it something more detaching than any outward shortcomings—an art of counterfeit that has its right place on the stage, and there alone, for in life it turns gold to dust and ashes. Then you ask yourself, what is truth? what is there that you like that you can depend upon? Halliday when he got home took out the last letter he had received from Seacombe, and read it through again, previous to beginning to answer it at some length.

Indecision with him seldom lasted long.

The appointment of which he had spoken to Elise held out many advantages to him; he was pretty certain of obtaining it if he came forward, and he had nearly determined to do so. Rightly had she divined that other changes for him might perhaps be involved.

He had declined to enlighten her further. But would the pending change in his position and circumstances have set his thoughts running on that idea of ‘marrying

in general,' which was all he had confessed to, but for the existence of some one in particular to whom he felt drawn, as to a girl of all others best fitted to share a life made up of intellectual activity and practical responsibilities—such as his?

Did she like him enough? Their acquaintance had been made and continued under such peculiar conditions that this was a question he had never seriously mooted before, and it was ten to one that Fan had never asked herself—Norbert apart—how she liked him.

He felt morally sure that the idea of such a thing as he was now contemplating had never entered her mind, but far from sure but that the ground for it, and perhaps for its easy reception, had long and insensibly been preparing. Of course she would be most reluctant to leave her brother; the question was if, at the present juncture, he ought to ask it, a question he could not all at once decide in the affirmative.

He was just finishing his letter, written in his ordinary vein, and without any mention in it of the possibility of his leaving London, when the post brought him a note from Fan herself.

A very few lines. The worst news is the soonest told. A severe relapse, for which no definite cause could be assigned, had done more than lose for Norbert all the ground gained hitherto. For several days his life had been in danger. Things were scarcely better now, since from day to day, from hour to hour, there was no foreseeing what complications might arise.

Halliday's brow contracted as he read. It saddened him strangely, little sanguine though he had ever felt on the subject of the boy's recovery, to hear such

ill tidings as left but a bare chance alive, if that.

'He will hardly pull through this; and even if he does—'

Halliday let the letter fall from his hands, and remained some time sunk in thought. It seemed as if Fate had taken up the matter of his decision, and cut the knot for him.

CHAPTER XXI.

A MEETING OF OLD FRIENDS.

'A MARRIAGE is arranged between Alexander, only son of the late General de Saumarez, and Lady Mary Carroll, eldest daughter of the late Earl of Blackorton.'

This was the announcement that had *not* yet appeared in the *Morning Post*, but which Elise had set her heart on seeing there, and her hand was at work accordingly.

Lady Molly, if not exactly a poet's dream, was at any rate a man of the world's paragon. The daughter of an earl—and such an earl! with a long line of ancestors distinguished in every era. Not a blot in the scutcheon. Then she passed for a beauty, had been surnamed 'The Fair Maid of Devon,' the county of her nativity, and, to complete all, had some fortune besides her face.

That Alec, the renowned prodigal, should ever meet with so felicitous a chance in the marriage market as this, had once upon a time seemed to his stepmother contrary to all reasonable expectations; but here there were one or two fortuitous circumstances telling in his favour.

Lady Molly was the eldest of seven. Her father had long been dead, and her mother was a great invalid, forced by her delicate health to reside chiefly at a country place belonging to them

near Torquay. Thus the daughter's first appearances in *Vanity Fair* had to be made under an alien wing, and there were altogether many vexatious little difficulties in the way of her seeing the world. Mrs. de Saumarez, herself a distant connection of the family, had known Lady Molly from childhood, and shown herself always very kind to the girl, her goddaughter; officiating as her chaperon on several occasions during her first season. Elise liked chaperoning girls. It was an office for which she seemed to the manner born; there was something about her which inspired everybody with the idea that she must be the most desirable guardian imaginable for the young, a feature in herself she had often remarked upon with some sly amusement. The strictest papas, the most anxious mammas, would consign their girls to her protection and influence with strange readiness and confidence. Stranger still, this confidence was mostly justified in the event. Elise from her philosophical standpoint could gauge pretty accurately the calibre of her *protégée* for the time being, and was careful to regulate her own conversation and tone accordingly. Milk for babes like Molly; stronger liquor for others of Cressida's stamp. Lady Molly was fond of her godmother, thought her a dear kind old thing, and in her secret heart had long been mightily curious about this dreadfully wicked stepson, of whom she had heard much, not all to his credit, but whom she had seen once or twice years before, when she was eating bread-and-butter in the schoolroom, and Alec already an accomplished specimen of gilded youth, not a little dazzling to her inexperience. This season they had met again for the first time since, at his

mother's house. The schoolgirl had grown up into a proud, handsome young lady, sufficiently aware whose turn it was to dazzle now.

But Mrs. de Saumarez, observing them both, and well on the alert, pronounced that Lady Molly, impassible though she seemed, was a little, just a little, smitten. Might there really be a hope for Alec in this quarter? If so it was worth her pushing it for him. He did not deserve it, of course, but might get it, she imagined, nevertheless, if only he would not hesitate to see how signally such a course must be to his own advantage, and act accordingly.

Mrs. Grundy might yet forget his past transgressions in consideration of future good behaviour, mindful also of his late windfall. But if he continued much longer to distinguish himself, as hitherto, by squandering his substance in riotous living, she really saw no loophole for him. On he would have to go, from sweet to bitter end. For ten years this young son of pleasure had gone on amusing himself to the scandal of orderly people, and people had gone on forgiving him in the same unaccountable manner. The measure was now pretty nigh full. He had chosen to live fast, and in random extravagant fashion, and had had his reward. Now she sees certain inexorable creditors—disgust of life, broken fortunes, the contempt of men, perhaps premature death—awaiting him in no very far distance. If he could outwit them yet, she thinks, and, having got all he ever will get out of lawless enjoyments and grown sick of them somewhat, go over at the eleventh hour to the opposition camp and prosper there, hoist the colours of steadiness, decorum, and family pride, and,

now that he has quite done with folly, settle down with a charming young bride to the solace of riches, honour, marriage-blessing; and dwell in peace, plenty, esteem, and solid well-being for the remainder of his term of days. If this could be brought about—and it did not seem impossible—Alec's worst enemies must admit him not to have made so bad a thing of this earth. If he would but be induced to see, in proper time, how desirable the new move would be, and make the effort. Such a metamorphosis must need a little effort, but was well worth it.

She sounded him adroitly on the subject, and found him more on his guard than usual. He merely observed, in a light jesting way, that Lady Molly had been so very well brought up, and was so haughty and so high-principled, that it was not very likely she would have *him*. Elise took care not to contradict this plausible statement. She was satisfied that the idea was in his head—kept there. He was very wary in his behaviour to Lady Molly.

Her chief fear was lest he should be right, and predestined to fail in making this conquest when the point came. The girl was inexperienced, but wide awake, and not in the least romantic. It was no such an enviable partnership that was offered her in this slightly used-up, volatile, hare-brained young officer, with the chance of reforming him afterwards, attaching him permanently, and inducing him to turn over a new leaf. He had well-nigh run through the whole chapter.

O, Lady Molly knew as well as any one that it would not be a brilliant piece of worldly wisdom on her part. Besides, she had had some talk on the subject with

her mother, who had thought it necessary to caution her. Yet Elise was not far wrong.

Alec's manner when they did meet, invariably courteous, but distant and reserved, was precisely calculated to disarm her, and work on her favourably. She was obliged to relent a little, and dream a little on the ambition of clipping this wild bird's wings and taming him down till he should not care to go astray.

Then she bethought her that all this was nonsense, or worse; recalled the dismal experience of one she knew—Lady Alethea Beaufoy—to be sure she was ten years older than Molly when she married, flying in the face of every one's advice, that charming good-for-nothing Dick Loftus, who eloped with Lord Plunger's wife not very long afterwards, having previously run through his bride's fortune; the terrible scandal that had ensued, the unenviable lot and anomalous position of the pitied and discarded wife. Then Lady Molly thought she would hold aloof from temptation, and became forthwith less gracious, less communicative. But with Alec, the older stager, there remained a fancy that the game might yet be in his hands if he would throw himself into it.

There was just this much to be said for him, that, as a rule, he had always miscondacted himself with a certain grace—perhaps the product of better qualities gone awry in their development, and that had resulted in such sterile growths as an attractive manner, that should have meant refinement of mind; quick penetration of feeling in others, that should have been sympathy; an impetuosity, genuine though evanescent, and that should have been, but was not, generosity. Thus he would willingly impoverish himself to help a friend, but

ruin a tradesman without compunction. He would irrecoverably compromise a woman's happiness, and then if, like the lover of old, to prove the reality of his love, he had been required to pick up the glove she had thrown among the lions, he would have been the one to go for it without winking.

Thus Lady Molly was inclined to put him down as a strange mixture, but scarcely a hopeless subject. His evident admiration for her, his restraint in the show of it, implying a perfect sense of the distance between her and his unworthy self,—all this was not merely flattering, but showed discrimination, and seemed to say that he had not parted with good feeling.

Matters had stood thus when they had left town; Alec for Ireland, Lady Molly for her retired Devonshire home, and Elise, not long afterwards, for Monks' Orchard, where she had leisure to ponder the project, and become more and more sanguine about it. Indeed, the next notification she received from Alec seemed to her pretty conclusive. In accordance with her advice, he had determined very shortly to sell his commission, and retire from the army.

'You should take example by Cressida Landon, your old flame,' she wrote to her stepson one day, soon after her arrival. 'You have no idea how gracefully that flighty little creature has settled down into rustic gentility, and how edifying it is to find her learning to churn and to make strawberry-jam and to love her husband. You see, nothing is impossible. Dear Alec, I think I see you—here the comic side of the picture would rise in her mind, overcoming all other contemplations—'in your new glory as county magis-

trate, or presiding at a farmers' dinner or a harvest-home!'

Alec wrote back in the same vein, saying that such a transformation was one to be emulated, if possible. Perhaps he could not do better than come down one of these days and take lessons in quiet life from Mrs. Kennedy.

Elise laughed. His threat was playful; but she said to herself, if ever he took a fancy to make it good, she would know how to parry it. Comparing, mentally, Cressida with Molly, she decided that the latter would not suffer by the juxtaposition. Cressida would have all the grace, Molly the style.

She would talk of her often to Cressida, rather maliciously, always in lavish terms of praise.

'Such a sweet girl! I know you and she will be friends directly—so fresh, and unaffected, and distinguished altogether. Alec means to come down whenever I invite her. He approves of her highly, you know. She is just his style.'

'And is he her style?' asked Cressida unconcernedly.

Elise deliberated.

'That is more than I am prepared to say. Girls' likings are not so easy to penetrate as men's. Lady Molly, young and artless though she is, certainly does not wear her heart upon her sleeve.'

'Has she such a thing?' asked Cressida.

'She has,' returned Elise, with confidence; 'but I must say it is uncommonly well defended. It would be a very good thing if all young people's affections were so safely hedged and ditched around. She has never betrayed the smallest preference for Alec, and her coldness naturally keeps him from making any marked approaches. But for that, I think it would have been settled by this time. Marry he must, one of these days; and

Lady Molly is a pearl, the counterpart of which he will not meet with in a hurry.'

Cressida soon got tired of having Lady Molly's perfections dinned into her ears; she felt perversely incredulous about them besides. Still a passing curiosity had arisen in her to see this jewel, Alec's *beau idéal* of a wife, if Elise were to be believed. But the latter was far too skilful a general to risk the miscarriage of her little plot by hurrying the *dénouement*. Alec was going yachting for the coming months of May and June. She looked on confidently to the summer for the third act of the drawing-room comedy she had taken in hand. In the mean time, entertainment was not wanting.

Lewis Lefroy was to come down to Monks' Orchard, nominally to paint a picture of the house, but in reality to amuse his patroness. He was particularly willing to drop into his position as supernumerary on this occasion, as there were other forces drawing him into that neighbourhood.

He had, he believed, quite made up his mind to marry Jeanie Alleyne. Perhaps she had guessed it. He would rather that there had been a trifle more uncertainty about her consent. A smooth road, to him, took away the zest of the race. He might beat gracefully about the bush for some time, but it would be all make-believe. Now to come, see, and conquer was too artless and unsuggestive a programme for his taste. He foresaw one break upon it. The chances were that the Colonel, from the simple habit of violent opposition to any project that might originate in his family independently of him, would make a fuss, though an absolute veto might be too unreasonable a move even for him to persist in for long. This part

of the campaign Lefroy, with all his desire for stirring incident, preferred to conduct from a distance, say from under the friendly roof of Monks' Orchard, where he might wait fluctuating, he knew, as long as he chose. His picture might detain him a month or more, and he might put off declaring his intentions till he was about to leave. In the mean time the sense of freedom was delicious. His decision he considered was as good as taken, but even if he would, he could not have acted upon it immediately. The serious trouble and anxiety the family were in just at present forbade him to hasten to obtrude himself upon them. He had heard the latest particulars from Halliday not long ago.

Norbert, who had rallied a little, was now supposed to be slowly progressing towards his former state of semi-convalescence, though alarmingly weakened and shattered by the last attack. Indeed, in his present state of increased nervous depression and shaken health some question had arisen as to whether Fan ought to be allowed to bear the heavier strain thus put upon her. Moreover, though he could still derive pleasure from her companionship and attention, things had begun to look as though he were past really benefiting even by these. Care might prolong his life, but such hopes as had once been raised of restoration to general or mental health were now of course considerably shaken. The Seacombe physician, who from the first had entered into the case with extraordinary interest, had taken him into his house for a time, and Fan had been sent home for a week or two, partly to recruit, and partly to talk matters over with her parents, who wished her to reconsider the intention she had firmly expressed, to return to the

cottage with Norbert as soon as the doctor should advise it.

Among her family it was only she, with her nineteen summers, who could build upon such shadowy possibilities as were held out now. The Colonel, though he pretended to make light of the last alarm, was secretly downcast beyond all measure — outwardly, however, only more austere and morose. Mrs. Alleyne's spirits were at the lowest ebb; Millie and Jeanie afraid to speak. But the latter seemed to cling closer and closer to the silver lining to her cloud of life.

Lefroy on arriving at Monks' Orchard felt he would have no choice but to enjoy his visit. The place was looking as bright and gay as possible. There was a dinner-party that night to begin with; and as he settled himself in his favourite chair in that familiar drawing-room, and sat chatting to his hostess, he felt a prospective regret for the self-indulgent, unattached, irresponsible bachelor life he was going to resign.

'You seem so thoroughly at home here,' he remarked, struck like others by the peculiar genial atmosphere that Elise seemed to carry about with her everywhere, 'that I find myself quite forgetting you are not the real *châtelaine*; then I think those old gentlemen on the walls are your ancestors, and fancy I trace resemblance to you.'

'Be sure not to forget it to-night, then,' she said warningly. 'I'm an interloper, Lewis, a stranger and sojourner in the land, where I'm allowed to remain only on sufferance. The real *châtelaine* is coming to dinner, however, so you'll please to bear in mind that I'm only her regent.'

'Ah, Mrs. Kennedy, to be sure! But what has become of her husband?' he asked ingenuously. 'Is

not he coming too? or do you manage to leave him out?'

Elise shook her head and laughed.

'O dear, no. Mr. Kennedy is not a shadow or a feather that can be blown away. But he does not make much show in society. A farming squire, you know — heart and soul in his crops and his hops, and his machines and his timber. Out all day. They will be late to-night. He vows he never gets home in time to dress, and it's difficult to tempt him even here. They go nowhere else. He's a thorough gentleman, you know, and the best man in the world — and the most illiterate.'

'It seems a pity, though,' said Lefroy mournfully; 'Miss Landon was such a charming, interesting girl.'

'I quite agree with you,' quoth the cheerful widow; 'but on the other hand, Mr. Kennedy makes such a nice foil to his wife, and could anything be kinder than that? He isn't ridiculous, either. A sort of Othello in white he looks beside her.'

'Is he jealous?' asked Lefroy, concerned.

'O, not in the least,' returned Elise; 'I told you he was not ridiculous. Besides, he is an Englishman, and not a Moor, and, like a wise man, regards his wife as infallible, like the British Constitution.'

'Is she happy, then?' he asked curiously.

'O, you must judge for yourself,' said Elise, laughing. 'It will be quite a meeting of old friends to-night.'

That same day Joe, for his sins, he said, but in reality for the matter of a boundary-wall, concerning which there had been some contention, had to go over to Greywell for an interview with Colonel Alleyne, an infliction

over which he groaned a good deal beforehand. He returned to luncheon, and not merely in unruffled spirits, but obviously in a state of high amusement at something. Cressida wondered to see him come in thus, on the broad grin; her thoughts ran to Norbert at once, and she accosted him with the usual anxious inquiry. Joe shook his head and turned grave for a moment, but only to break out into fresh hilarity the next instant.

'What are you laughing at?' she said, with an impatient sigh of disappointment. 'You looked so pleased, I thought you *must* bring good news from Greywell.'

'So I do,' said he, nodding sagaciously; 'at least, I suppose it's good. One always takes for granted that sort of thing is for the best of both parties.'

'What sort of thing?' she urged. 'Joe, what are you talking about?'

'Don't be impatient,' he remonstrated; 'the long and the short of the story is, that unexpectedly I stumbled on a tender scene going on over there, of all places in the world.'

'Really?' said Cressida, smiling. 'Has Millie or Jeanie actually got a lover at last? Let me guess. It must be one of the curates at the Abbey. Which, now, I wonder?'

'Guess away,' said Joe knowingly; 'but you're on an utterly wrong tack. It wasn't Millie, nor Jeanie either.'

Now Cressida knew that Fan was at home at present, but even now it did not occur to her that she could be one of the persons concerned. She waited, puzzled, and had to be told.

'After I'd had my talk out with old Herod,' began Joe, 'and managed to get him into a decent sort of humour (luckily I found we both wanted to have the wall

pulled down), in a fit of civility he begged me to take the shorter cut across his kitchen-garden, and let myself out by the door into the fields. As I knew I was late, I made no objection, and started off as directed. Just as I was cutting along over his cabbages, lo and behold, Miss Fan and a somebody I didn't recognise at first, walking up and down between the raspberry-bushes, so deep in whatever they were talking about that they never even saw me coming along. Now I knew they couldn't have gone there to eat raspberries, as they aren't ripe yet. Besides—upon my soul, Cressida, I didn't listen—but I couldn't help catching a sentence or two. I don't remember them word for word; but there were promises going on, and all in most solemn fashion. Of course one couldn't doubt for a minute what it meant,' he concluded, with glee. Joe—it was one of his weak points—could be as curious and eager as a woman in little matters of history like these.

'But all this interests me extremely,' said Cressida, with animation. 'I must—must find out who *he* is.'

'Yes; but why must you be in such a hurry?' objected Joe. 'They had done marching up and down, and were saying good-bye, so we came right upon each other at the gate. Not one bit put out did they seem. Perhaps it's a settled affair, that everybody knows of but ourselves, and the Colonel has said, "Bless you, my children," already. Fan looked just as she always does, as cool as a cucumber, said "How d'ye do?" to me, and went back. Halliday and I walked on as far as the Lullington road together.'

'Halliday?' echoed Cressida, stupefied, as Joe inadvertently let slip the name.

'There, the murder's out,' he said, laughing; 'but really it was lucky I made the discovery, for it appears we're to meet him to-night at Monks' Orchard, and it's well to be up to the time of day.'

'He is coming to dine there from Greywell?' uttered Cressida, still breathless with surprise.

'O Lord, no. He isn't at Greywell. He's stopping at Lulling-ton for two nights; came yesterday, and leaves again for London to-morrow morning, I understand. And that's the long and the short of my story.'

The news—it was too much to expect that Cressida should hear it with indifference—made her silent and thoughtful. That biting pang of jealousy at the idea that any other should have gained the ascendancy she had once, and in vain, desired for herself, must be stifled somehow—none know better than she how wild and irrational it is. But that that other should be Fan, passed all comprehension. Joe's news was half incredible, and there was gall and wormwood in it every way, if true.

So he was dining at Monks' Orchard to-night, to meet her. No doubt, if he *was* going to be married, he was coming this evening out of a kind of bravado—how like him!—to prove to himself how stone-dead his old preference was, how even his resentment had cooled into simple unconcern, and she was less to him than the first comer!

She thought of the last time they had met together—of that affront she had never forgiven, never could forgive him—and felt herself shrink from what was before her. Alas, there was more on his side now, if he only knew it! Perhaps he did; perhaps she had sunk to a still lower depth in his eyes. She said she would find

out; small pains would he take to conceal his sentiments of that sort. As of old, her heart rebelled against the blighting condemnation she might apprehend. She felt driven back on the line of defiance. She could let him see, at all events, that she regretted nothing, had nothing to regret; that she was one to be envied, admired, adored; not cavilled and carped at, or weighed in the balances with ordinary mortals.

She found herself looking forward to the encounter with nervous impatience. She went to dress early, before Joe had come in, and debated a long time what to wear. It was her first appearance in general society since her marriage. She wanted to be both sombre and striking. Black velvet answered both purposes, and she arrayed herself accordingly; with diamond stars in her hair, and diamond drops in her ears. The gems were certainly less magnificent than Mr. Marriott's, of long-forgotten memory; but had the advantage of being heirlooms that had belonged to Joe's great-grandmother, instead of purchases fresh from Harry Emmanuel's shop-window. Joe had often observed, and repeated to-night, that he liked her a long way better in black velvet than anything else; and as she looked in the glass just before starting, she said to herself he was right.

The little wagonette—Joe's last addition to his stables—was waiting at the door to take them. Joe was fond of it himself, because of the lid, and the clever way in which it took off and on. But it was dark and close, and forced you to sit sideways, which Cressida never liked, and shook you all to bits besides. However, she forgot to remark on these disagreeables to-night.

They were late, and found the



[illegible]



CRESSIDA ARRIVED FOR THE ENCOUNTER.



whole party already assembled. Cressida was glad to see the rooms so full. Meeting in a crowd has its advantages sometimes.

Lefroy pressed forwards at once to pay his respects. He was to take her down to dinner, and she let him engross her beforehand, perhaps aware that Halliday, who stood aloof, was watching her with undisguised attention.

Would she be altered? had been the natural question uppermost in his mind. Not in the least, was his first comment. Unconsciously he had been prepared for a falling off, and sought for it now in vain. Fascinating for ever, she had gained in many ways. Her eyes were bright as of yore, but less restless and sad; her figure had gained in strength, spring, and elasticity; her manner, which, for a girl's, had always been rather dignified and self-possessed, had only altered in becoming less listless and irresolute. In a word, such little touches as might once have been wished away were now gone, and he saw before him an artist's lovely model, and in her eyes the soul of a poet's heroine.

Cressida felt she looked the enchantress; that everybody in the room was admiring her; so much must be apparent even to one who should refuse to join in the general worship.

It is her hour of triumph; she may revel in the contrast of this meeting with the last. That will barely pacify her, however. Can she make him feel one moment of regret, one flash of self-hatred for having given her up? Perhaps, might she have read on his countenance, beneath its distance and disapproval, that he eternally prized in spite of himself what he had forfeited, and would forfeit again if required—they might have been friends even now.

He was her other neighbour at dinner. There was one point at least on which they seemed both of one mind—determined not to appear anxious to talk, or to avoid talking. Their conversation might have remained formal and mechanical as it had begun, but for Cressida's intention to ascertain for herself how much truth there might be in the news Joe had brought.

'You are staying at Greywell, I hear,' she began rather thoughtlessly by and by. He corrected her.

'No, not at Greywell—in Lullington.'

'Ah, yes, I forgot. My husband met you this morning, he said, at the Alleynes.'

'Yes; I had a farewell visit to pay, or what seems likely to be so,' and he explained to her about the Scotch appointment that was to be vacant almost immediately and for which he meant to apply. There was little or no doubt as to his obtaining it, and in that case he expected to be cut off somewhat from his old circle of friends in the south.

Cressida listened in silence.

'You are going—alone?' she hazarded.

'Alone,' he replied, with a look of slight surprise and in a tone of decision that convinced her. Joe, then, had perhaps been quite wrong—he did garble things and had an artless imagination. Evidently it was a mistake.

'How are they all at Greywell?' she said, with a sigh. 'I scarcely see them now. You may think how I long to hear more than I do. Nobody has a faint idea of what I've suffered on that account.'

It was true. Halliday felt that it might be true. Yet his lip curled.

'I can well imagine it,' he replied.

Cressida cast a reproachful

glance at him. What right had he to be so curt, so contemptuous? He himself had countenanced that backward step of hers.

'I hear Fan is at home,' she resumed presently, 'but she has not been to see me.' Her eyes drooped, but from under their lids they scrutinised his face carefully as she continued, 'She and I used to be friends once upon a time.'

'Have you quarrelled?' he asked imperturbably, but with marked constraint.

'Not quarrelled, but—' her voice quivered a little, with mingled emotions; she half turned away. Halliday was convinced she was acting, and it hardened him afresh.

'I ought not to complain,' Cressida resumed, recovering herself, 'even if she does bear me ill-will, as I fear now and then that she must, for what has gone by. Can she forgive me the harm she looks upon as my work?'

'Perhaps she has never even thought of asking herself that,' he replied significantly, 'since she has been so taken up by trying to undo it.'

Again Cressida felt incensed, up in arms. 'I think it is very hard,' she said impulsively, 'that one should be judged so entirely by the effect of one's conduct. One might have acted exactly in the same way, yet if the result had been different, one would have had praise instead of blame from every one.'

'Really,' said Halliday, provoked in his turn, 'I was not aware that you had had so much to complain of in the way of harsh judgments from other people;' he was wondering ironically to himself, which she regarded as of most consequence, the evil itself, or what the world said about it. 'Of course no one can hold you exactly

responsible for all that has occurred; and so far as I have seen, the world acquits you entirely.'

'It is not the world,' she persisted, dissatisfied, 'they know so little; I mean one's friends, those few of whom one really cares that they should think well of one,' significantly.

'Only don't tell me I am one of those,' rejoined Halliday quickly, almost involuntarily.

'Why?'

'Because I shall know very well that you are laughing at me,' he replied.

'But if I were in earnest?' she said, raising her eyes with a playful expression, but her lip trembled a little underneath.

He kept her waiting a moment for his retort, then said, with an emphasis there was no mistaking, 'I should be sorry to think so.'

Cressida had her answer. Lewis Lefroy's gentle voice was heard on the other side appealing to her on a point of gastronomy. She turned to him to distract herself from the exasperation she was feeling, talked on, smiled, jested with him perseveringly, nor addressed another word or look to Halliday all dinner-time.

He felt he had been a little hard, inhuman; but depression made him bitter; he was suffering from one of those pessimistic moods when our repressed disgust with things in general vents itself in exaggerated expression of whatever sentiment is uppermost. Had he met Cressida humbled, contrite, downcast, meek, unobtrusive, or gone off, he would have felt more merciful; but really her appearance and manner to-night were a challenge. Hers had been only too effectual. Bright, beautiful, gay, happy, conquering—well, even that he might have let pass,—but forsooth, she wished to be accredited high-minded, proud,

dignified, and conscientious. Again the mocking contrast of the seeming triumph of self-seeking and shuffling, as here personified, with the lot she had woven for others—for Norbert, for Fan—met him, and alienated him to the point of making him feel vehemently irreconcilable. Little need for him to tell her that. Their kinship of mind had made Cressida at least quick to discern the play of his thought in his countenance and manner. All through the evening she felt it, like an iron weight upon her, a pressure she resisted strenuously, vainly. It was as if one were forbidding her ever again to be proud, happy, and self-pleased. Yet she would be all these. Lefroy with his flattering ways and amusing prattle soothed her mortified feelings. She took pleasure in dazzling the circle in general, and him in particular, whilst Halliday kept apart, contemptuous, yes, but markedly alone in his despatch.

Towards the close of the evening Cressida was asked to sing. She was accustomed to beg off when she could, not caring to exhibit herself in anything in which she did not excel. But to-night she found it impossible to decline gracefully; there was, besides, no lady vocalist present to outshine her. A duet or two with Lefroy, who piped prettily in a small way, was followed by a call for a solo. Cressida demurred. Joe observed that she sang Schumann well, conscientiously believing in his preference for that master's compositions. There was one that was very lugubrious that he liked; he reminded her of it now, and that she had sung it last night. Lefroy identified the song in a moment, and chimed in with his request. It was his particular favourite, he said; he had a theory about it, and how it ought to

be sung, and he was dying to hear Mrs. Kennedy's interpretation.

Cressida had sung it a hundred times before, was fond of it herself with all its melancholy. A sad, eloquent requiem of love. What meant this curious reluctance to 'interpret' it to-night? She yielded, suddenly ashamed of her hesitation, resenting the cause of it, placed herself at the piano and began—

'I murmur not, though my heart break
for thee;
I murmur not, love lost eternally!
In sunny gems I saw thee, love, ere-
while;
On thy heart's wilderness no star may
smile.
Known long ago, I saw thee as I slept,
love;
Dark is the night that o'er thy soul has
crept, love;
There is a snake consuming at thy
heart;
I saw thee, love, low-fallen, as thou
art.'

Seldom had she sung so well. Excitement, nervous resolution, lent fresh strength and clearness to her voice. She always enunciated distinctly, and had a dramatic instinct that never went wrong. But the words came home to her as they never had before. She sang them as in self-mockery, like one defiantly pronouncing her own doom, not slurring a syllable nor bating one breath of its truth and bitterness. Everybody was surprised and delighted, and came round her with compliments and thanks. She smiled back automatically, feeling dizzy, and as if half awake from a dream. She was not sorry to see the party beginning to break up. Halliday was one of the first to leave, and presently Joe came to where she was standing, leaning over the piano, and cut short Lefroy, who was busy expounding his theory of the song to her, by observing that the wagonette was waiting. The artist frowned helplessly.

'I wonder,' he said, as he wished her good-night, 'if I should offend you by asking you to revoke an old threat in my favour?'

'Indeed, I know of nothing you are likely to ask that I should be likely to refuse,' said Cressida charmingly.

'Long, long ago I attempted your portrait from memory, and failed ignominiously. But you would not sit to me then; you said, *Never!* Might I try it again—from the original?'

'O, I have no objection,' said Cressida; 'only I warn you that I mean to exact a service from you in return.'

To put a girdle round the earth in forty minutes, Lefroy would have professed himself willing and ready.

'Will you come to lunch with us to-morrow, then? I'll tell you about it,' she said, smiling, but a sadness and paleness had come into her face that struck him.

'She isn't happy,' he sighed to himself; 'and no wonder, with that great rough British bear.' It gave him a melancholy pleasure to think so. 'Her husband's a good fellow—oh, awfully good!—but as to being capable of appreciating her, or entering into her finer feelings—the rest was a sigh.

Cressida was glad when she and Joe had got into the carriage, into the dark, out of the sight of men and women. Presently Joe found that she was sobbing violently.

'What's the matter?' he said gently. She did not reply; she seemed to be struggling against a hysterical attack; and when they reached home broke down completely, much to his distress and dismay.

He tried to soothe her, carried her up-stairs, laid her on the sofa, and sat by her quietly till the paroxysm subsided. She seldom suffered in this way, and it rather alarmed him.

'What was it, darling?' he asked, with solicitude.

'O, they should not have made me sing,' she murmured wearily; 'I—I was tired, and that breaks me down.'

Joe kissed the tears from her eyes, talked mirth-provoking nonsense to her, as he would have petted a child, made her laugh at last with his funny things. All the while he forebore steadily to put a single question.

'Dear old fellow,' she whispered faintly, as she lay with half-closed eyes, and that pretty wandering smile on her lips. 'How good you are to me! Joe, was there ever anybody *quite* so kind as you?'

(To be continued.)

A WALK IN SAXON SWITZERLAND.

ONE of the numerous collateral hardships attendant upon 'hard times' like the present consists herein that, needing more than common the recreation and mental refreshment that travelling accords, we are less able than usual to afford ourselves this luxury. Hence the wise man, who does not intend to let himself be wholly done out of his holiday for all the machinations of Sultan and Czar, Bismarck, Beaconsfield, and Gortschakoff, but purposes to maintain for himself, nevertheless, the *mens sana in corpore sano* so requisite for continuous work, just looks around him to see where he can get the most change with the least cost—in other words, where he can get the most for his money. And a good many men will turn their eyes towards the Continent, because, in spite of the apparent expense of getting there, a well-managed trip will really cost less than if one went to Ramsgate or Folkestone, and settled down into dear and cheerless lodgings. Also because he knows that for change to be really adequate it must be *complete*, and he must for a time leave the beef and mutton atmosphere of his home behind him. Then by a natural transition he most easily turns his eye towards Germany, for recent excursion arrangements have reduced the cost of reaching Bismarck-land to a very manageable point. And where with less expenditure of time and money could he more easily find himself in a new milieu? Those who can walk, who have a sufficient com-

mand of the language, and do not order things unknown to German usage, can compass their expenditure by an average of seven to nine shillings a day; neither need this expense be markedly increased if ladies be of the party. For those who are fond of walking tours Germany offers a wide field of choice, and it is even possible in a short space of time to range over the best walking ground in Northern Germany. Thus we will name several skeleton tours, none of which need cost the traveller any considerable sum, though in speaking generally of expense it must be borne in mind that each person must add on what he or she requires in the way of additional luxuries. We cannot make allowance for idiosyncrasies, *i.e.* for those who require sherry, a beverage almost unknown in Germany, and so on. We speak for the reasonable tourist, who does in Rome as the Romans do, and conforms to the national usages.

From London to Antwerp, Brussels, Aix-la-Chapelle, Cologne; or cheaper, London to Rotterdam, and thence up the Rhine, a somewhat tedious and long journey, as the boat must go against stream.

In either case steamboat from Cologne to Mayence, so as to see the full beauties of both sides of the Rhine, which is not possible from the railway. Mayence to Frankfort, Frankfort to Eisenach. Here he can visit the Wartburg, sacred to the memory of Luther, and then take a three or four days' walking trip into the Thu-

ringian Forest, a mountainous and very beautiful district. Cutting right across, he can rejoin the railroad at Rudolstadt. Thence to Dresden, where he can visit the art treasures of that city, and make a three or four days' walking tour through the Saxon Switzerland; after which he must set his face homewards, for which he has the following choice of routes: Dresden to Hamburg, visiting this by far the most beautiful of all German cities, and returning by steamer to London (36 hours); or Dresden and Magdeburg to Halberstadt, and thence a four or five days' walk through the Harz Mountains, rejoining the rail at Harzburg; thence Brunswick, Hanover, Bremen, and again by steamer to London. Such a trip would convey a most excellent idea of Northern Germany, and would effect the happy combination of Nature and Art.

For while Hamburg is the most beautiful city externally of Germany, Dresden can boast of art treasures such as are not surpassed this side the Alps. The picture-gallery possesses Raphael's 'Capo Lavore,' the Sistine 'Madonna,' and if it were for naught else, our journey thither would be repaid by a sight of this masterpiece. It is from Dresden that we must start upon our tour through the Saxon Switzerland, and as we have not space to treat of all the tours we have projected in detail, we will confine ourselves to this.

The very picturesque tract of country known for the last century as the Saxon Switzerland is properly called the Meissener Hochland. It owes this ambitious name to a rage once prevalent for comparisons of scenery. It is a pity that a really fine piece of country should be overweighted by its name, which seems to promise what it cannot

fulfil. No one who goes to the Saxon Switzerland must look for Swiss scenery, snow-capped mountains, and so forth. The mountains here are anything but high; the highest is but 1771 feet above the sea-level. This fact once realised, and no undue expectations being formed, the Saxon Switzerland will be pronounced charming and *sui generis*. The district, which extends over about twenty-three square miles, consists of a plateau of sandstone intersected by the river Elbe. In consequence of the sharp fissures into which sandstone splits, the plateau has been deeply indented by the action of water, and this has induced the singular rock formations wherein the chief attractions of the Saxon Switzerland consist. Some of these are wildly fantastic and grotesque, and in their wildness recall the scenery of a *Salvator Rosa*. Were it not for the unhappily cockneyfied element that pervades the whole district, which has become a favourite, and is an easy Sunday outing for the Dresdeners, we might at times deem ourselves far away from civilisation. Yet cockneyfied as we are bound in truth to admit that the region has become, if our tourist chooses his time judiciously he may avoid too much encounter with his fellow-men (supposing he wishes to avoid this) and the raptures of German tourists. We will presume that he has set aside three days for his tour. Of course if he can spare more, can stay to sleep at the various mountain inns in the delusive hope of seeing sunrises, and can penetrate into side valleys less tourist-haunted, the traveller will not be unwarded.

Leaving Dresden the tourist can either enter the Saxon Switzerland by steamer or train: the

latter is this time to be preferred, as the ascent of the stream is tedious and the scenery not sufficiently attractive. Tickets should be taken for Poetzscha, which is reached in three-quarters of an hour. Sit if possible on the left-hand side of the carriage. At Poetzscha a ferry crosses to Wehlen, a bright little village just at the entrance of the Saxon Switzerland. This is also the station for the guides, and the tourist will be duly pestered to employ one. They are good and authorised, and their tariff is three shillings a day; but they are quite dispensable, as finger-posts exist to all the chief points. Here also those who take their walking tours in a *chaise à porteur* or on donkey or horseback will find all they require. From Wehlen the Bastei is our goal, but it is usual first to make a *détour* through the Utterwalder and Zscherre (Black) Grund. These Grund—wild and narrow wooded ravines—are peculiar to the Saxon Switzerland, and these two give a good idea of its scenery, of which the chief characteristic is masses of water-worn sandstone standing isolated or jutting out *en bloc* from among the vegetation. To these rocks the guides give all manner of names, such as the Rockgate, which forms a treble archway; the Devil's Kitchen, a funnel-shaped grotto; the Wall of Hell, a wide mass of rock standing up perpendicular and solitary. The Utterwalder Grund is one of the finest of these rocky gorges. Its sides are so lofty and in parts are so close together that the sun can never penetrate, and they are damp and cold, while where the sun does reach the ground is one luxuriant mass of ferns and moss and wild flowers. The Zscherre Grund, which is taken on the way back, is in parts even more gro-

tesque. For a mile in length the tourist passes only tall strange-shaped rocks, whose upright position seems at times precarious to his safety. It lands him in a fine pine forest, after which the ground begins to rise, and in about half an hour he reaches the Bastei. The Bastei is a rock that rises precipitously from the Elbe 968 feet above the sea-level, and from whose summit one of the finest views of the Saxon Switzerland is enjoyed. The tourist—who if he knows German will not fail to have armed himself with one of Meyer's excellent Handbooks, and only in default thereof with the less diffuse Bädiker, whom he can get in English—will find every point of the panorama clearly indicated for him by name. Suffice it therefore for us to say that the view on the one side commands the Elbe, with the square-topped perpendicular heights of Lilienstein and Königstein (the latter crowned by an imposing fortress) in the foreground; while a little to the other side he can look into a deep abyss, closed in by walls of solid rock whose abrupt peaks take strange shapes, and resemble more than aught else a series of Assyrian seated figures. The Bastei boasts, in common with all German points of view, an excellent inn, where the tourist will do well to refresh himself before he proceeds. According to his time and strength he can now choose his way to Schandau, on the Elbe, either by way of the Amsel Grund or by way of the Brand. The latter is the longest, but an English pedestrian will think nothing of a three hours' walk; and the view from the Brand, scarcely inferior to the Bastei, and in some respects grander and more sombre, as the silver band of the Elbe is absent, will well repay him.

At Schandau, where the tourist will get a good bed, 1s. to 1s. 6d., and supper, he will do well to spend the night, and start thence next day to the Lichtenhainer waterfall through the Kirnitzschthal, a pretty green valley traversed by a good carriage-road. This waterfall is the greatest 'do' of the Saxon Switzerland, and this indeed its most cockneyfied point. The water is detained by a sluice, which is not opened till the tourist is within sight, and then only runs for about five minutes, after which he is expected to give at least a shilling gratuity in return for this artificial display. From this point those who have time, and care to leave the beaten track, can make an interesting two days' excursion into the hinder Saxon Switzerland, and into the so-called Bohemian Switzerland; but here a guide is requisite. Those who are taking our three days' excursion cannot afford the time, but must ascend gently hence to the Kuhstall, a fine archway of rock twentyfeet in height, which owes its unromantic name of Cow-stable to the fact that it was employed during the Thirty Years' War by the peasants as a place of refuge for their cattle. We regret to state that this fine mass of rock is defaced by the names of tourists, who have no more reputable means of insuring to themselves immortality; and also that the spot is a great centre for itinerant vendors of fancy wares. With discretion and due bargaining the tourist may, if he cares, secure some cheap garnets which are found and set in this immediate neighbourhood. The spot commands a fine view of the deep-wooded gorge of the Habichtsgrund, into which the tourist must now descend down steep steps flanked by high walls of rock, and afterwards, traversing a fine wood, he finds himself at

the foot of the basaltic Kleine Winterberg. A rather steep ascent of three-quarters of an hour suffices to reach the plateau, which commands a pretty view back to the Kuhstall and the adjacent piles of rock. From here the ascent of the Grosse Winterberg is easy; and hence he will find lying before him an extensive prospect embracing nearly the whole of the Saxon Switzerland district. At this point rest and refreshment should be taken; and here those who have time at their disposal frequently stay the night. Our tourist cannot do this, as he has still some ground to traverse this day. He must take a pathway through the wood which forces him to cross the Bohemian frontier, and in an hour he will find himself at the Prebischthor, a wide lofty arch of really magnificent form and dimensions, which rises up grand and solitary, a natural bridge at places one hundred feet wide and fifty feet long, which can be ascended, and from where there is, to our mind, the brightest view of all. All around is wild in formation, the horizon is bounded by the Erzgebirge, and if the sun be shining and bringing into relief the colour of the sandstone, the whole effect is most pictorial. Here again we are sorry to have to note the same cockneyisms. From the Prebischthor a steep path, between walls of rock, leads into the green and mossy valley of the Biela; and thence into the wider Kaunitzthal, where the stream is employed to turn water-wheels, and where human habitations and industries greet us. But even here the fine rocks rise upon either hand, and splendid Scotch firs lend the charms of their aspect and odour to the whole scene. The valley continues for an hour and a half till it reaches Herrnkeitschen, a

village on the Elbe, where those who desire to close their excursion take steam back to Dresden, or, if too late for the day's steamer, ferry across to Schöna and take the train.

Our tourist will also take the train; but will get out at Königstein, and sleep there. Next day, if he have a taste for such things, he may obtain for himself permission to see the fortress, a steep ascent of three-quarters of an hour. The ramparts afford charming views towards that side of the Saxon Switzerland which he has now left behind him. Hence he can descend into the Bielagrund, a ravine with the most remarkable rock formations. This will lead in about two hours' easy walking to a water-cure establishment, the Schweizermühle; and thence an-

other two hours will bring him to the Tyssaer Wände, to which a visit should on no account be neglected, for of all the wild and fine rock formations of the district this is the wildest and finest. It presents a perfect labyrinth of grotesque shapes; and a guide is quite desirable here, as also to ascend the Schneeberg, if time serves for this, which depends upon whether the tourist has visited the fortress or no. Thence to Bodenbach, whence train or steamer conveys our traveller back to Dresden after a pleasant and most inexpensive excursion. On the return trip preference should be given to the steamer if its times be convenient, as the approach to Dresden by water is really very pretty in the soft evening light.

THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER XV.

THE NIGHT AIR ALWAYS AFFECTS MY NERVES.

I REJOINED the ant, who was striding rapidly along on the edge of the wood. We walked side by side in silence for some little distance. I was thinking of what the spider had said. Could it be that, as she had said, advantage was being taken of my good faith? She had evidently more shrewdness, penetration, and knowledge of the world than I; but, on the other hand, she had made no secret of her prejudice against ants, and it is well known that prejudices make us unfair, because they pervert the judgment.

We were now skirting along the wild paddock to which I have already alluded, and we were soon once more in the hollow path which had caused the catastrophe of the previous day.

'Take care,' I said to the ant; 'there are some ant-lions' ambushes here into which you might fall.'

'O, I know them,' she rejoined. 'You go on first, and I'll look after myself.'

The descent of the bank was accomplished without accident. Arrived in the road we turned to the right, and a few minutes later we entered the wood. The sun was beginning to set.

'Bother the processionists!' suddenly exclaimed my companion. 'We shall have to wait ever such a time.'

I looked before me, and great was my surprise at seeing what it was which barred our progress. The road was completely blocked by row after row of caterpillars marching in single file, and so

close to each other that it was impossible to pass between them.

'Whatever are they?' I cried.

'O, the larvæ of procession-moths. Every evening they leave their nest, which you can see down there on the trunk of that oak, and go to feed on other trees.'

'And why do they walk head to tail in that style?'

'O, probably because it happens to suit them.'

'How wonderful!'

'The same thing happens every evening. When the time for leaving their nests arrives one of them sets off, another follows, and this goes on until the kind of silken bag which serves them as a home during the day, and which they make themselves, is quite empty. They don't all walk in single file, for some prefer to go two or three abreast. When the first halts, all do the same; when the first starts again, the whole column is set in motion.'

'And you think a good many will pass in that manner now?'

'Seven or eight hundred; the whole colony, in fact.'

'Extraordinary!'

'I have often met them, and very tiresome they are, for they take a long time to file past. The idea of making war on them and making them evacuate this wood has been mooted in our councils; but it would be no light undertaking to do so.'

'Could they defend themselves against you?'

'I don't think they could; but they would have some formidable champions. Do you see that

splendid green beetle climbing up the trunk of that tree down there? It is a calosoma. There are some thirty such in the neighbourhood, who would rigorously defend the caterpillars if we attacked them.'

'They are fond of them, then?'
'Yes, after a fashion of their own.'

'What do you mean?'
'That they feed on them, make their dinners off them; the best



of reasons for allowing no one else to meddle with them.'

The filing past of the caterpillars continued without interruption. They were rather large, and they bristled with long grayish hairs. I told the ant that though the procession offered an insurmountable obstacle to her, I could

cross it easily enough, and that she had but to climb on my back as she had already done before. My suggestion pleased her, and she acted upon it. I then cleared the caterpillars with one bound, and resumed our journey.

'Have we much farther to go?' I inquired presently.

'If we could follow this road we should certainly reach my home before night; but I think it would be prudent to leave it and go through the wood, for here we run a risk of unpleasant meetings. As soon as it begins to get dark this path is frequented by numerous nocturnal prowlers, whom it is as well to avoid. I mean such creatures as hedgehogs, shrews, and snakes, not to speak of hares and rabbits, who might trample us under their feet. Come this way; we shall soon find one of our own paths.'

We entered the thicket. This was the first time I had ever been in a wood, and I was deeply impressed by the novelty of the scene. The growing darkness contributed not a little to produce in me that mental condition which is not exactly fear, yet resembles fear. There is certainly something solemn about a wood, especially in the evening. It seems as if evil passions must reign in its dark shadows, and as if its inhabitants must necessarily be more ferocious than those of smiling sunlit fields and meadows.

I was deeply moved. I tried to reason with myself, and to persuade myself that my excitement was the result of too vivid an imagination; but it is of no use to reason against impressions: one just receives them impassively. Now and then I glanced at the ant, who trotted silently along beside me. What were my thoughts to her? It seemed to me that her face was assuming a diabolical expression, much aggravated by the loss of one of her antennæ. Why had she not two like the rest of the world? Her squinting eyes, too, now seemed to have in them a crafty look I had never before noticed. How foolish I had been to trust myself with her! Instead of passing the night

peacefully at the bottom of a cosy little hole beneath some stone, here I was running about the woods in bad company. Yes, I realised it all now. I felt how justly I had been warned against my companion. And where was I going? To spend the night in an ants' nest? Yes, cricket, what on earth were you thinking of when you agreed to such an extraordinary proposal? Did any one ever before go to an ants' nest in this free-and-easy manner? You might have been carried off to one or enticed to one, but to go with your eyes open in this manner!

But after all, I thought, there is still time to draw back. Why must I follow this ant? What if I were guilty of a breach of politeness to her by suddenly turning tail and making for the path in double-quick time? But where was the path now? Was it on the right hand or the left? I did not know. I had lost my way, and that being the case I was just as likely as not to walk straight into the colony of ants, where, coming alone and unprotected, murder, inevitable murder, would await me. Bah! the very thought made me shudder.

'What is that?' I exclaimed, trembling with fright, as I stared at a strange-looking object apparently crouching at the foot of a tree.

'It is a *boletus*,' replied the ant, 'a large mushroom. Really,' she added, laughing, 'one would imagine you were afraid of it.'

'Afraid! of course I am not afraid; but it is always well to distrust the unfamiliar. I thought it was some animal lying there.'

'Well, here we are in one of our paths; we can walk more comfortably now.'

'Hush! I hear voices behind me,' I exclaimed, as I stopped. 'Voices whispering, several voices.'

'They are those of ants on their way home; let us wait for them.'

'Yes, let us wait for them,' I muttered aside. 'It is all over now; the die is cast, there is no drawing back. If I have made a fool of myself I must abide the consequences.'

Five or six ants now joined us.

'Why, it is Meg!' they cried, when they saw my companion (I already knew that her name

was Meg). 'We thought you were lost when you did not come back last night. But who is that? Where did you pick up that cricket?'

'A fine escort!' cried one.

'A handsome conquest!' echoed another.

'You are all out!' added a third; 'it's a steed she has taken into her service.'

'It was you, then, whom we saw seated on the creature's back?'



'Well done, Meg! we take care of ourselves in our old age!'

'Silence, you giddy young things!' cried Meg; 'this good cricket saved my life yesterday. It so happens that just now, through a chain of circumstances it would take too long to relate, he is cut off from his home and from his friends. I have invited him to spend a few days with us.'

Then Meg went on talking to them in a lower voice, and I watched them whispering and laughing together.

What Meg had said had reassured me a little, but only a little, for she might have said it merely to allay my suspicions. What were they all whispering about now?

We were following a 'very narrow path made by the ants, and there was only just room for me to pass along it. Presently it led between the stalks of ferns growing so closely together that I could hardly squeeze myself between them; then it passed through a kind of tunnel, under a fallen branch or over a stone, and it was

only by climbing this and creeping under that, at the cost of gigantic efforts, that I managed to accomplish the difficult transit.

It was now quite dark ; and I told Meg I thought it would perhaps be better for me not to go into the ants' nest till the next morning, for how could I find my way about her home in the dark ?

'Make you mind easy,' she replied ; 'our colony is lit up.'

I looked upon this reply merely as a bad joke, and thought to myself, 'They are not going to trouble their heads about me any more now ; they know I can't escape them, and they no longer think it necessary even to give me a civil answer.'

All my old terror now revived.

'Here we are at last !' cried Meg.

We now entered a little glade with a very dry soil, on which grew nothing but short tufts of heather and scrubby grass, with here and there a little thicket of buckthorn, willow, and broom. The centre of this glade, which rose somewhat above the general level, was occupied by a couple of stunted beech-trees, which from the close proximity of their trunks to each other near the roots you could tell to be but the shoots, already grown old, of some parent stock now removed.

At the base of these trunks I saw a huge dome-shaped tumulus or barrow, which in the light of the now rising moon stood out clearly against the green foliage of the bank beyond.

This was the mysterious colony of the ants !

The most profound silence reigned around ; it might have been a city of the dead. Above it rose the gloomy forms of the beech-trees half stripped of their leaves. There was something altogether ominous in its appearance.

As we approached it Meg and her companions quickened their pace. I was walking in their midst, and as I was hurried along the words 'It is a prisoner she has taken' haunted me, and I found myself repeating them like the refrain of a song,

'A prisoner — a prisoner — prisoner !'

And then, 'Make your mind easy ; our colony is lit up.'

There was certainly some hidden meaning in that last sentence — an ironical meaning probably — which I could not fathom.

We soon came to one of the entrances, which was then being barricaded for the night, according to the usual custom. Meg gave the password and we went in.

The first thing which struck me was the pungent and acrid smell which, as is well known, is characteristic of ants. I found myself in a room of moderate size, probably the guard-room, containing some fifty inmates. They did not seem to notice me, most likely because of the password given by my guide. I followed her along one of five or six passages leading from this room and then down several steps, getting ever nearer and nearer to the heart of the citadel.

It was exceedingly close and warm.

I have already said that my olfactory nerves were greeted on entering the first room by a pungent smell. I subsequently found that this smell proceeded from an acid liquid secreted in their bodies by ants, and ejected at their enemies when they are provoked or attacked. The second thing to strike me was the fact that we could see our way quite clearly, though we were in a subterranean passage.

A dim bluish light pervaded the place.

It had, then, been no bad joke when Meg said to me, 'Make your mind easy; our colony is lit up.'

It was lit up; but how?—by what means? I asked my companion for an explanation.

'You will soon see all about it,' was the reply.

The light gradually increased as we went down.

Suddenly we came out in a

large room, with a low ceiling supported by a number of pillars of hardened earth, and with a whitish spongy floor, which emitted a bluish light of vividness sufficient for us to make out all the details characteristic of the extensive excavation at the entrance to which we had just arrived.

The ceiling and pillars of this curious subterranean chamber



were alike covered with innumerable ants, which appeared to be asleep, for not one of them stirred when we crossed the threshold.

'Well?' said Meg to me.

'I am struck dumb with surprise,' I murmured. 'I can't believe that these are ants. We have entered the very heart of your stronghold, and not a creature moves! Suppose I had made my way in with some sinister design?'

'O, you wouldn't have got as far as this. The alarm would have been given by the guards at the entrance, and you would have been put to death immediately; my comrades sleep peacefully here in full confidence in the vigilance of the sentinels at the doors.'

'Now please explain what seems to me the really extraordinary light which proceeds from the floor.'

'O, that's simple enough,' answered Meg: 'it comes from the whitish spongy fibres of a kind of mushroom,* which grows in old decayed wood. Our ants' nest is built on the stump of an old beech long since cut down. The warmth and humidity down here have been favourable to the growth of this phosphorescent fungus. Have you never noticed any of it before?'

'No, never.'

'That's because you don't go about in the woods of an evening. But now that your curiosity is

* *Rhizomorpha subterranea*.

satisfied follow me ; I am going to take you to one of our guests' chambers. You want rest, and so do I. To-morrow I will show you all over our colony.'

We entered another passage, and Meg led me to a very clean little room. When I had entered I helped her to replace some small

sticks which barricaded the entrance.

We wished each other good-night, and she retired.

My fears were all dispelled.

Meg's professions of friendship had been sincere. I felt perfectly safe in the ants' nest I had so much dreaded.

CHAPTER XVI.

AMONGST THE ANTS.

TOWARDS the middle of the night I was suddenly woke by a loud noise which seemed to come from the large room ; and a little later I heard footsteps passing backwards and forwards along the passage leading to my room.

Suddenly these footsteps seemed to pause at my door.

'Who is there ?' I cried.

No answer ; but I heard whispering in the passage.

'Who is there ?' I repeated ; 'what do you want ?'

'Who are *you*?' was the retort, in a far from friendly tone.

'O, don't you know ? I am a friend, the cricket Meg brought in with her yesterday.'

'I know nothing about that ; what are you doing there ? Open the door, and be quick about it.'

At these words I became bathed in a cold sweat. In a moment I realised all the danger of my position. It was evident that the ants with whom I had to deal did not know of my arrival in their home. I had entered it at night. I had been brought in without any disturbance, thanks to Meg's password ; but only a few guards of one of the numerous entrances had seen me. To the mass of the inhabitants I was an intruder : my anxiety may be imagined.

'Friends,' I said, 'I repeat that

it was Meg, one of your own people, who brought me in.'

'Meg ? which Meg ? there are ever so many Megs here.'

My perplexity was at its height when a happy thought suddenly struck me, and I inquired, 'Are all your Megs one antenna short ?'

I received no immediate answer, but I heard the ants talking to each other in low voices, and I made out that there was discussion going on, in which the words 'old Meg' recurred again and again. Presently the voices died away in the distance.

I lay awake in a state of great anxiety for some time, and at the slightest noise I imagined that the ants had returned in force to break into my room and murder me. Why had I not thought to ask Meg to pass the night within call, so that I might have appealed to her if necessary ? But one cannot foresee everything. One fear after another now oppressed me : perhaps my companion of the previous night had forgotten me, and would leave the ants' nest without me ; or perhaps she would not remember where she had left me ; or some accident might happen to her before the morning—she was but mortal after all. In any case I might consider my fate sealed. I thought of trying an escape, but what difficulties would encompass

any such attempt! It would be better to wait and see how things turned out.

At last I fell into a troubled sleep. Terrible dreams haunted my repose: I was again upon

the raft on which I had passed the previous night. Suddenly on the edge of the water-lily leaf a hideous head appeared with its eyes fixed upon mine. This head was of huge dimensions, and the



eyes glared upon me like live coals. I turned to flee, and on the other side rose a similar head with the same burning eyes; then the water suddenly became alive with quite a circle of horrible heads, their glittering eyes all fixed on me. I uttered a despairing cry for help; then the ant

appeared beside me, and pointing to a big hole she had made in the middle of the leaf, whispered, 'Let us escape through that—we will dive.' Then I felt her drawing me down to the bottom of the water by one leg; I struggled to go up again, but as I did so I found myself in the grasp of hundreds

of claws, which dragged me down, down, lower, lower, lower. I was choking. Then a spider appeared on the scene, looked at me with a sneer, and said, 'I warned you, cricket; what do you want to do amongst the ants? You will be eaten alive, and a good riddance too.' Then, without knowing how I got there, I found myself in a narrow prison, and knew that the door which shut me in was gradually yielding to the combined efforts of crowds of furious ants shouting, 'Eat him! devour him!' whilst I, crouching in a corner, cried, 'Mercy! you know that Meg, one of your own people, brought me here. Go and fetch her! Mercy! help! Meg! help!' But suddenly Meg's own voice broke in upon my dream with the words,

'Come, cricket, wake; it is time to get up.'

As she spoke she broke down the barricade which served as a door to my room.

'Well,' she said, 'what kind of a night have you had?'

'Ah,' I cried, 'it is you, Meg; it's time you came.'

'What do you mean, friend?'

'I mean—I mean—that I was impatiently waiting for you. Has anything happened in the ants' nest during the night?'

'Nothing that I know of. Have you been disturbed?'

'No, not exactly disturbed. I heard steps in the passage once.'

'It was only the watch going their rounds, I expect.'

'Ah, well, perhaps so.'

'Why, you are quite bathed in perspiration.'

'I found my room rather close; it is very warm here.'

'I have brought you your breakfast,' said Meg, fetching what looked like a little white stone from outside. 'When you have appeased your hunger we will go

round the colony, and I'll show you all our curiosities.'

'What is that little stone?' I inquired.

'It's sugar,' she replied, 'good white sugar; taste it, friend, and when you've finished it you'll lick your paws, I'll be bound.'

The terrors of the night had not spoilt my appetite, and I did full justice to the breakfast provided for me.

'It is delicious, this sugar,' I observed; 'I never tasted anything like it before. Where did you get it?'

'Ah, ah!' she laughed, 'it suits your palate, does it? It's a dainty we reserve for our young larvæ and our special friends. It is difficult enough to get. We have to fetch it from the big house, you know, which is a good way off. It is a hazardous expedition, undertaken by none but the boldest and sharpest amongst us.'

'You seem to venture great distances on your expeditions.'

'We let our young folks go where they like.'

'If I understand rightly, you are one of the elders of the colony?'

'O, yes, I am one of the oldest members of our family; that accounts for my having lost a limb.'

'Ah, yes,' I said; 'I see you have only one antenna.'

'I lost the other ever such a time ago in a battle. I missed it dreadfully at first. I could hardly distinguish between different scents, and my sense of hearing was also considerably dulled; but gradually the antenna which remained to me acquired by practice great delicacy of perception.'

I looked at Meg in surprised inquiry. She observed that I did so, and replied,

'Don't you know that it is with our antennæ that we distinguish between scents and sounds?'

'I smell and hear,' I rejoined ; 'but I have never cared to inquire with which part of my body I do so.'

'Well, friend, it's with your antennæ, so you'll know another time. Now that you've done your breakfast,' she added, 'you can follow me, and I'll do the honours of our colony. And first I'll show you the place where we educate our larvæ. It's in the upper story, it is true, but we ought to begin with it, for if we put off going we might find it empty.'

With that Meg led the way, and I followed her.

The streets were now beginning to fill. I have already explained that the evening before we had gone down into the very bottom of the ants' nest. I had then merely glanced at the arrangement of the chambers, but now I observed that the town consisted of a considerable number of stories piled one upon the other, and that the lower apartments were connected with the upper by a series of vertical passages without steps, the ants scaling them quite easily. My superior bulk, and the impossibility of my climbing up what appeared to me like the walls of wells, compelled us to make many *détours* and to select the wider and less steep of the passages. This suggested the reflection that if I had carried out my idea of a nocturnal flight I should certainly never have found my way out of this confusing labyrinth. I have said that the streets were beginning to fill. At every step we met ants hurrying along with a busy air, most of them carrying heavy loads. Amongst the large red ants, forming the bulk of the population, I noticed another variety, which seemed to live on good terms with their companions. I passed

one cell containing a huge white larva with a yellow head a good deal bigger than myself, and not very unlike the cockchafer larvæ I had seen at my cousin's, the mole-cricket, only it was more hairy and more squat. I also noticed some other very singular-looking larvæ, with their bodies cased in black and apparently strong sheaths covered with raised patterns. The head and legs alone protruded from these sheaths.

I begged Meg to tell me all about these strange visitors.

'Presently,' she replied ; 'we shall have time to examine everything thoroughly. We must make haste now to the nurseries, or we shall find them empty.'

This was the second time she had expressed a fear of finding these nurseries empty if we lost time in going to them. Here was a mystery I was at a loss to fathom.

The greater number of the ants we passed as we went along looked at me either indifferently or with surprise, and merely wished Meg a friendly good-day. Others asked in a low voice who I was, but I am bound to say that my appearance in the streets of their town provoked neither insult nor complaint. It was evident that 'old Meg' was held in general esteem, and her assurance that I ran no risk in accepting her invitation to go home had evidently been well founded.

At last we arrived at one of the long galleries, and here an extraordinary scene met my eyes. The walls and countless cells opening on to the galleries were lined with a multitude of little white worms, some of which were so small as to be almost invisible. The larger ones were about the size of ants. By each worm stood an ant, feeding the little creature from its own mouth with what I ascertained to be a kind of sweet syrup.

I forgot to say that as we entered the galleries several ants had run up to us with most-threatening gestures; but Meg had advanced to meet them and had mollified them, probably by telling them that I was a friend, for they at once retired and resumed their interrupted promenade.

'All the little grubs you see here,' explained Meg, 'are our larvæ; they are of every variety of age, some having only just come out of the egg, whilst others have attained to nearly their full size; that big fellow near you, for instance, is now being fed for the last time. To-morrow it must begin to spin its cocoon and change into a pupa.'

Struck dumb with surprise I stared silently at Meg, who went on, 'Presently I will show you the cells for our pupæ and those for our eggs; but now watch what is going on here.'

The ants who had rushed forwards when we entered were walking up and down, taking no part in the work of the nurses; and I now learnt that they were a corps of soldiers told off to keep guard over the refectories. Other ants, acting as domestic servants, were cleaning the rooms, setting everything in its place, and clearing away all rubbish.

'The ants who take care of the little ones are probably their mothers?' I observed.

'Not a bit of it,' answered Meg. 'All the nurses you see there are spinsters, and spinsters they'll remain to the end of their lives. Mothers don't take care of their children themselves except when they go away to found new colonies. In old and densely populated settlements such as this they have nothing to do but to lay their eggs.'

'How astonishing! And what do the males do?'

'O, they don't work either. All our public offices, both civil

and military, are held by what we call *neuters*, who are neither male nor female. I myself am an old spinster. Our males, and those females amongst us who are destined to marry, have wings.'

'Did I understand you to say those who are destined to marry?'

'Yes; and as soon as they are married we pull out their wings—that is, unless they pull them out for themselves, as most of them do.'

'And how about the males?'

'Once they are married we never see them again. I must explain that our marriages are contracted outside the colony.'

'And the husbands never return?'

'Never. We should kill them if they attempted to do so.'

'Why?'

'Because our males don't work, and we don't care to keep paupers.'

'How very wonderful!'

The ants now suddenly began to run about, touching each other with their antennæ, and in a moment the refectory became a scene of great animation, crowds of ants at the same time pouring in from every entrance.

'They are going to take away the children,' explained Meg.

At a second signal the nurses, assisted by the new-comers, picked up the grubs and began to carry them off. The smallest were taken by one porter, but some of the bigger ones required the united assistance of two or three ants. At first there was great confusion, but very soon all fell into their places, and the procession moved off in the most admirable order.

I looked inquiringly at Meg.

'They are going to take them to the upper story, where they will get the warmth of the sun,' she replied. 'Now let's go and see the pupæ, for they will soon be carried off too.'

We went into some other apart-

ments, where we found no nurses, but only guards and cleaners. As before the former rushed threateningly towards us, but again Meg appeased them with a few words.

The ground was strewn with numerous round white masses, looking like big eggs or rather bags. My companion explained to me that these bags, consisting of a close and very fine silken

web, each contain a full-grown ant larva. The web, she added, is spun by the larva itself, and when it is completely enveloped it remains motionless for a few days, gradually assuming the appearance of an ant with its antennæ and legs tucked against its body. When the right moment arrives the cocoon is opened at one end by the neuters, and the



ant, still enclosed in its pupa skin, is drawn out. The skin is then removed, and the perfect insect is taken up into the sunshine, that its limbs, still feeble and of a whitish hue, may there dry and acquire their due strength and proper colour.

Presently a scene similar to that I had witnessed in the nursery of the larvæ was enacted here. A body of ants rushed in and carried off the pupæ.

A little farther on I saw the opening of a number of the cocoons containing pupæ which had reached their full development. Some of the workers tore open one end of the silken cocoons with their mandibles, and drew out the pupæ, which they then relieved of a thin pellicle or filmy skin with

which they were covered. That done, they pulled out the legs and antennæ of the newly developed ants, and carried them off to place them in the sun.

'We have still to visit the egg-room,' observed Meg; 'it is close by here.'

We had but a few steps to go before we found ourselves in the room alluded to.

Here and there rose piles of eggs, and in the centre of the apartment a number of neuters or workers were following an ant of much larger dimensions than themselves. This was a mother, who at each step laid an egg, which was at once picked up by her attendants and taken to one of the piles. Other neuters were

busily engaged at these piles in taking up the eggs one by one, and gently passing them between their mandibles, moistening them as they did so with their saliva.

I inquired the object of this operation, and, to my great surprise, was informed that it is indispensable to the due development of the reproductive germ; that the saliva thus applied makes the egg increase in size, giving it also greater transparency, consistency, and milkiness; and lastly, that after the washing the egg is soon hatched, which would not be the case if it were left to itself.

'Well, I must leave you now,' said Meg at last: 'I must go to work; for old as I am I am not allowed to sit with crossed legs doing nothing. With us laziness is looked upon as a crime, and punished with death.'

I asked her if I should be in any danger during her absence; to which she replied,

'Don't be afraid; every one in the ant-hill is now informed of your presence amongst us. You are free to go wherever you like unmolested. This evening or tomorrow morning I will show you over the rest of our colony. You can either walk about our passages, retire to your own room, or take a turn outside—in a word, do just as the humour takes you.'

'That being the case,' I replied, 'I'll go and get some air; I shall not be sorry to see the sun again, and as you will be occupied till the evening I will spend the day out of doors. But, by the way, if I don't see you till it gets dark, how am I to find my room again?'

'You can ask the first ant you see, and he'll show you the way. But now, *au revoir*!'

As she spoke Meg hurried away; and, following the train of workers carrying out the pupæ and larvæ, I gained one of the doors, and was soon outside the ant-hill.



SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER X. THE RIGI.

MANY another mountain in Switzerland might claim to rank as high as the Rigi in the estimation of the public, if the only thing to be taken into account were the view visible from its summit.

Those, for instance, who have been undergoing the whey-cure on the Weissenstein, and have ascended to the still more elevated part of the mountain called the Hasenmatt, and those, too, who have stood on the top of the popular Seelisberg 'Känzli,' or 'pulpit,' gazing over a world of lake and mountain, will all discourse enthusiastically of the special advantages of their own favourite points of view, and declare that there is nothing finer, there can be nothing finer, in the world ! But no sooner is the Rigi mentioned than we feel that neither extent of prospect, nor altitude, nor beauty are of any avail unless they be combined with renown. Even a mountain cannot do without renown.

When the Rigi had taken leave of the kingdom of Neptune, and had succeeded in lifting his dripping head and broad back out of the melancholy waves and into the light of day, he seems to have made up his mind to become famous at any cost. But people who propose to themselves such an aim as this must be wise enough to separate from the multitude, for it is only by taking up an isolated position that it is possible to attract much attention or to be interesting, unless one hap-

pens to be a head taller than the rest of the world. The Rigi accordingly soon severed all connection with his neighbours in the south ; and, while they reared their heads to heaven in jealous emulation one of another, he waited quietly until the waters had dispersed and everything was reduced to geographical order. That which at first had been an island soon became a continent ; and when the mountain looked round he found himself standing alone and solitary, with lowlands on one side and highlands on the other, and the lakes of Lucerne, Zug, Lowerz, and Aeger in his immediate neighbourhood.

He was alone. No other mountain came close enough to tread upon his toes, and his nearest neighbour and rival was Pilatus, who looked at him across the lake from the south. However, the position of each was irrevocably fixed by this time ; and as to making a name, well, at all events there was no hurry about it. Meantime the mountain grew old, very old, and began visibly to decay and crumble. Its slopes and level surfaces had long since been covered with woods and primeval forests, and the extensive plateaux and quiet valleys on its summit, though never yet trodden by human feet, were well stocked with such birds and animals as frequent the Alps. No one else came, and the spirit of the mountain remained quite undisturbed in the seclusion of his forests,

sometimes wrapping himself up closely in his cloud-mantle, sometimes looking down from his rocky citadel upon the surrounding country, and counting the sun-rises and sunsets and the years and centuries as they passed over his head.

Meantime many great changes had taken place in the valley below. The woodman's axe had been at work in the forests, letting in daylight and clearing open spaces about the shore of the lake; groups of huts had grown up here and there; heathenism had disappeared; crosses had been erected in a few places, and the sound of the convent-bell might be heard summoning the scattered population day by day to the agricultural labours which they pursued in common around the cloistered walls. In time the clusters of huts became villages, surrounded by well-tilled fields, and the green meadows were filled with herds of cattle, some of which were already beginning to make their way up the hills. Signs of life, too, began to appear round about the foot of the old mountain, and places began to spring up on its borders, which were afterwards greatly developed, and are now well known as Art, Immensee, Goldau, Seewen, Lowerz, Ingenbohl, Brunnen, Gersau, Vitznau, Weggis, Greppen, and Küssnacht. From these various places outposts were sent forth up the sides of the mountain, in the shape of rough brown chalets, and soon the lonely forests of the Rigi were enlivened by the tinkle of cow-bells and the shouts of the herdsmen. But in spite of all this, the mountain had not made itself a name. Soon, however, there appeared the first ray of the golden glory which was hereafter to encircle its brow. At the time when the three Tells met at Grütli,

when the lowly were crushed and the proud had it all their own way, when, in fact, the land was groaning under the arbitrary and oppressive rule of Austrian governors, it happened that there were three pious sisters dwelling at Art, whose beauty had attracted the notice of the profligate and tyrannical lord of Schwanau, who persecuted them cruelly, until it seemed that no other means of escape remained open to them save flight. Accordingly, one night they made their way up into the then pathless wilderness on the Rigi, and went on until they came to a spot just above Weggis, where a murmuring spring of cold water gushes forth from the cracks in the breccia rock. Here they determined to remain, and here they built themselves a miserable hut of bark. How long they managed to live in this seclusion, with no food but berries and roots, and no society but that of the wild animals of the forest, no one knows; but nothing more was heard of them in the valley, and it was not known whether they were alive or dead. It is certain, however, that they must have been long dead when the cow-keepers of the mountain began to notice that three small, pale, glimmering lights appeared every night above a certain spot in the wood; and when at length curiosity induced them to go and see what was the meaning of it, they found the bodies of the three sisters turned into mummies and lying by the side of the spring. A chapel dedicated to the Archangel Michael was built on the spot, and the spring was thenceforth known as the Sisters' Fountain; and, thanks to the archangel, the mountain was freed entirely and for ever from all noxious vermin and poisonous animals.

The story of the three sisters



AN ALPINE INN, IN THE SNOW.

was spread abroad by the herdsmen, and was soon well known everywhere ; and a few pious souls would make a pilgrimage to the chapel and spring, the miraculous healing powers of which were very soon discovered. Herdsmen, peasants, and pilgrims were the first to come, and they would say their prayers before the picture of the 'Virgin of the Cold Bath;' and if anyone was troubled by an intermittent fever or any nervous complaint, he would dip himself three times in the ice-cold water which was collected in a wooden trough, and would go down the mountain again firmly believing that he had been healed. Thus it was that people's eyes began to be directed towards the Rigi, and the 'Cold Bath' acquired notoriety.

Some time later, in the year 1593, a monk who was collecting herbs on the eastern side of the mountain, where it slopes down towards Lowerz, chanced to discover another spring, on the spot now called the Rigi-Scheideck. This was of acid mineral water, and soon became as celebrated as the other. The old mountain was beginning to get a name.

Prosaic individuals, indeed, relegate the monk and his herbs to the realm of fancy, and declare that, as a matter of fact, the spring was discovered by some workmen who were employed at the beginning of the sixteenth century in building a small house at Scheideck for the accommodation of persons wishing to undergo the whey-cure, or something of that sort. Chancing to leave the axes, with which they had been felling trees, all night in the open air, they found them in the morning covered with rust, owing to the mineral water with which the ground was saturated, and thus their attention was drawn to the existence of the spring.

The old mountain was now no longer left in solitude, and his visitors became more numerous still when, in 1689, a chapel was built by a pious counsellor of Art, to the east of the chapel at the Cold Bath, in a deep narrow valley which runs up the mountain diagonally from south-east to north-west. It was intended at first for the benefit of the herdsmen who pasture their cattle on the Rigi Alps in the summer-time; and the little house which he built in addition served as a summer and winter dwelling for a few Capuchin monks. The chapel was consecrated by the papal nuncio in 1690, and pilgrimages to it speedily became so frequent that it was found necessary to build a larger chapel some thirty years later. The place was called Klös-terli, the 'little convent.'

As plenary indulgence was promised by Popes Clement XII. and Pius VI. to all who should ascend the Rigi, the sacred mountain was thronged. But the pilgrimage was by no means a pleasant one in those days, as, when he reached the summit of the mountain, the pilgrim found no provision whatever made for his comfort, and everybody had to find accommodation as best he might. This inconvenience of course made itself especially felt on high days and holidays; on the vigils of great festivals; on St. Mary Magdalene's day, when the cow-keepers' festival took place; on the 5th August, when the feast of the 'Queen of the Mountain' was held, and on the 6th September. On these occasions the mountain was thronged with pilgrims, and its former seclusion was invaded by the sound of chanting and ringing of bells, while sacred banners waved from its summit, and dancing and drinking contributed to the general animation and hila-

city. Even so lately as the middle of the last century, the arrangements of the bathing establishment at the Rigi-Kaldbad, or Cold Bath, were extremely primitive. J. G. Sulzer, one of the first persons who travelled in Switzerland, says: 'The Cold Bath is a square place shut in on three sides by a wall of rock, and on the fourth by a hermit's hut. In the middle there is a wooden bath, which is kept constantly full of water by a spring which issues forth from between two rocks. The water is very cold and pure, and quite free from any mineral taint. The people who use this bath keep all their clothes on while they sit in it.'

Scarcely any one, however, as yet ascended the mountain for its own sake, to see the sunrise from the top, or to admire the surrounding landscape. All who came had some practical end in view, for it had not yet entered people's heads to be enthusiastic about the beauties of Nature, and neither young men nor young women knew what it was to feel their eyes filled with tears as they gazed into the bright pure world of snowy mountains, saw the sun rise over the purple mountains of Appenzell and touch the Bernese Alps with his glowing finger, or watched the moon as she bathed the whole valley beneath in her soft misty radiance. Visitors in those days came to drink whey or obtain indulgence, and the fame of the Rigi had not yet reached its culminating point; indeed, a change in people's minds was necessary before it could do so.

In 1729 Haller had written his poem called 'The Alps,' and though involved and pedantic in style, it did not fail of its object, which was to draw attention to the Alps, and to induce people to

visit Switzerland. But the effect produced by Rousseau's romance, *La Nouvelle Héloïse*, which appeared in 1761, was far more powerful, for from it people learnt something of the pure and elevated enjoyment to be derived from intercourse with Nature as she is to be found among the Alps, and cultivated minds throughout Europe were profoundly impressed. Thenceforth Western Switzerland became a favourite resort with sentimental souls; but the rest of the country remained an almost unknown land, until it was discovered by Saussure and Ebel. The first of these won and opened up the region of the High Alps, with its peaks and glaciers and icy deserts; the second, a German physician and naturalist belonging to Neumark, explored and wrote descriptions of the whole of Switzerland, including both the country and its inhabitants in his researches, and thereby induced thousands to visit it and judge for themselves of its attractions.

Ebel's name is, moreover, intimately connected with the history of the Rigi; for, besides assisting in the preparation of numerous maps and panoramas of Switzerland, he took the first panorama of the Rigi under his especial surveillance. He, too, was the first to recognise the importance of the Rigi-Culm, or culminating point of the Rigi, and the future in store for it; and it was he who advised the innkeeper of Klösterli, Martin Bürgi, whose family are now millionaires, to build an inn on the summit. A cottage was first of all built there in 1815, and the next year an uncomfortable little mountain-inn with about a dozen beds in it was erected by the aid of contributions from various places, more especially Zürich.

The next great impression was produced by Schiller's grand poem 'William Tell.' Every one was anxious to see the place in which the scene was laid, and as soon as peace was restored after the battle of Waterloo visitors began to arrive in shoals. People wanted to see and admire the grand beauty of the landscape, and to refresh their spirits by the contemplation of the sublime and mighty mountains. Then, too, they joyfully recognised the fact that lungs which had been choked with the dust of cities, and poisoned with the vapours which are bred in the plain, might derive great benefit from the fresh pure air of the Alps; and so the signal was given, and from the north of Europe to the shores of the Mediterranean 'Switzerland and the Rigi' became the general watchwords.

Such being the case, of course it was necessary to make arrangements for the proper reception and accommodation of these numerous visitors, and the old mountain became the scene of energetic preparations. One inn arose after another; Swiss speculators were not slow in making the most of the wealth which the foreigners brought with them into the country; and the two together set a crown of gold on the head of the old Rigi. What people long for when they are young they sometimes get in superabundance when they are old. Fame had come to the Rigi at last, and perhaps the spirit of the mountain had a little too much of it; but he could not rid himself of his guests, now that he had once summoned them, and so, leaving them in undisputed possession of his dominions, he crept away into one of his huge caverns, perhaps the Stigelfattbalm, where he still remains, and is said to play all sorts of tricks such as gnomes delight in.

But people became more importunate than ever; and in the year 1871 they began to gird the mountain's decaying body with iron rails. The panting steam-engine now climbs up its southern side, whistling shrilly as it goes, and there is a railway station on the spot where the three sisters once dwelt, far apart from the world, in their little bark hut. A telegraph-wire, too, winds round the rocks to warn the proud hotel-keepers on the summit of the approach of visitors from all quarters of the world. But even this was found not to be enough, and since the summer of 1875 another railway has been constructed along the northern slope, beginning at Art and terminating at the Rigi-Culm. Starting from Art at mid-day, the traveller may reach the Hôtel Schreiber, have his dinner, and be ready by two o'clock to begin studying the panorama.

If we open any of the old guide-books—Lutz's *Handbook to Switzerland for the Year 1822*, for example—several inns are mentioned, particularly the Ox and the White Horse; and we see from good old Bädeler that, even so lately as twenty years ago, there were no such grand hotels as there are at present, neither were the charges at all extravagant. The number of the hotels is now doubled, and the charges have doubled too.

In 1856, at the Rigi-Culm hotel, you could have a bedroom for a franc and a half or two francs; breakfast, a franc and a half; *table d'hôte*, without wine, three francs; wine, two to three francs; but now you have to pay three to six francs for a room, four to five francs for *table d'hôte* without wine, three to five francs for wine. In those days about fifteen or twenty thousand visitors would ascend the mountain in the course of the summer, but in 1875 the numbers



VIEW FROM KALTBAD, ON THE RIGL.

amounted to eighty thousand, and that in an unfavourable season. The hotel proprietors hope that the numbers will increase yet more ; and if they do, it is a question whether the two thousand beds, which is the aggregate number furnished by all the hotels on the Rigi, will be sufficient to supply the needs of the great army of admirers.

But the mountain is in good hands, and he shows his gratitude by filling these same hands with gold. In fact, the Rigi is a mine of gold and silver. In other places people have to dig for the precious metals with shovel and pickaxe, and are forced to toil in the sweat of their brow ; but here the treasure lies upon the surface. The pure silvery atmosphere is coined into five-franc pieces, and the golden glow of sunrise and sunset into napoleons ; a species of minting which has lately been taken in hand by a large company calling itself the 'Regina Montium,' an appellation which they justify by going back to the fifteenth century and quoting Dekan von Bonstetten, who placed the Rigi in the centre of the eight old cantons, called it the heart of Switzerland and Europe, and bestowed upon it the grand surname of 'Mons Regina.' According to some people, Rigi is indeed a corruption of *regina* ; but others, not satisfied with this, have dug still further, and because the Rigi is a mountain of particularly wild aspect, they try to derive its name from *mons rigidus*, 'the iron-sided mountain.' With an equal amount of reason, Gemmi has been derived from *gemitus*, 'a sigh,' because the travellers generally sigh with weariness while crossing the pass ; according to which idea, a good many mountains in Switzerland might justly share the same appellation. Other persons, again,

timidly suggest that the name may be derived from the old word *rihe* or *rige*, 'a row,' in allusion to the way in which its strata are deposited ; and so on, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

Unfortunately the 'Regina-Montium Joint-Stock Company for digging after hidden treasure' had not made sufficiently sure of their ground ; and if they did not meet with sand, they found something nearly as bad. For the Rigi is composed of a brecciated rock, with a strong tendency to cleave and split, and its beauty gradually diminishes as fragment after fragment is detached from its sides. The best building-sites are on the southern half of the mountain, which extends to Vitznau and Lowerz, and may indeed be considered as a continuation of the Bürgenstock, which is composed of better material belonging to the more substantial cretaceous formations, and is separated from the Vitznauerstock only by the Lake of Lowerz. The northern, and unfortunately the larger, half of the mountain consists of strata of conglomerate, alternating with huge beds of soft sandstone ; and as the conglomerate rests upon marl, of course the mountain as a whole possesses no solidity, and may be compared with a giant whose feet are of clay. *Nagelfluh*, as this conglomerate is called, is a coarse kind of pudding-stone, consisting of pebbles and fragments of rock of various kinds, derived in this instance from the High Alps, and cemented together by clay. *Fluh* means 'rock,' and it is called *Nagelfluh*, or 'nail-rock,' because the pebbles of which it is composed often stick out like the heads of large nails. These pebbles were brought together and deposited by the agency of water ; but as this took place not all at once, but at different times, the

conglomerate is found in various strata, separated from one another by beds of clay or sand, which are easily disintegrated or washed out by water. The conglomerate is of two kinds—limestone nail-rock and coloured or variegated nail-rock, as it is called, owing to its generally reddish hue, and to its being composed of red porphyry, green serpentine, granite, hornblende, and pebbles of gray and brownish limestone.

The limestone nail-rock consists—But we beg the reader's pardon! People do not ascend the Rigi on a bright summer day in order that they may grope about among dead stones. With flowers and verdure and such a panorama all around, who cares what the mountain is made of, or how it came into being? It is enough that it is here, and that here it is likely to remain for a thousand generations, in spite of the softness of its sandstone.

It is a matter of some difficulty to decide how we shall make the ascent. Shall it be on foot or on horseback? by way of Weggis, Greppen, Immensee, Art, or Gersau? Shall it be by railway? and if so, by which railway? By the one which commences the ascent from Vitznau, or by the new one, which calls itself the Art-Rigi railway? Both have their own peculiar beauties. The Vitznau railway has the wonderful views towards the south and west, and the famous Schnurtobel bridge, which spans the wild-looking bed of a mountain-torrent, and besides this it skirts precipices enough to make the traveller shudder pleasantly. The line from Art runs across the desert of Goldau, and as it winds its way upwards it affords many a lovely peep into the classic little canton of Schwyz. Then, too, it passes the celebrated Kräbelwand, a precipitous wall of

rock, past which the train creeps very cautiously, and it goes through the Red-rock tunnel and over the wonderful bridges which span the stream of the Dossenbach, while a succession of lovely views are to be seen from its windows.

The effect would, no doubt, be heightened if we were to keep our eyes closed until we reach the Staffel station, and were then to open them and take in the whole beauty of the scene in one rapid survey. The train winds upwards in a spiral between the Rigi-Culm and Rigi-Rothstock, and when it reaches the top the panorama of northern and north-eastern Switzerland opens suddenly out before us as if by magic, and not even the most prosaic individual in the world can help feeling some emotion.

A wide extent of hills and valleys lies bathed in sunshine at our feet and dotted with innumerable white towns and villages. Yonder is the German Black Forest looming blue in the distance. There is the Feldberg, and there are the Suabian Alps, and the mountains of the Jura and Vosges are lost in the purple haze which shrouds the far horizon. At the foot of the precipice below lies the sparkling and ever-beautiful Lake of Lucerne; the village yonder is Küssnacht; the bright town at the corner of the lake, which is reflected so clearly in the waters, is Lucerne, and close by stands Pilatus, keeping guard over her; one hill rises behind another, with numerous lakes lying glistening in between, and over all is the clear blue sky flecked with golden clouds.

But from the Rigi-Culm, which is the highest point of the mountain, the panorama extends over three hundred miles in circumference, and the eye may wander like the eagle without let or

hindrance from east to west, from north to south, from the lowlands to the High Alps, to the snow-capped glittering peaks of the Jungfrau, Eiger, Monk, Wetterhorn, Finsteraarhorn, and Schreckhorn, or may survey the Alpine valleys of Uri and Glarus, and the lake-valleys which lie close at hand, smiling out of the dark mysterious forests which enshroud them. On one side, the view extends upwards of a hundred and eighty miles, La Dôle in the Jura being its extreme limit. But all this should be seen under various aspects and in various lights—when the mists fill the valley, making it look like a billowy sea, and the mountains like dark floating islands; when the dawning light, as it gains more and more power, touches first the Bernese Alps, then drives away the mist and wakens the earth to the joy of another day; when the glow of sunset lights up all the mountains in the east, from the Säntis to the Bristenstock, and when the blue moonlight glimmers on the surface of the numerous lakes, and the mountains stand round in a circle, looking like so many shivering blue shadows.

But the Rigi is of a very nervous temperament, and depends much upon the state of the weather. A good many thousands, after ascending the mountain full of eager expectation, have found nothing but a gray veil spread before their eyes, which often not even the most patient waiting will suffice to remove. Yet can we wonder if the old Rigi becomes at times impatient when he is obliged to listen day after day to the self-same expressions of wonder, admiration, delight, and disappointment repeated so many thousand times in all the languages of the world? There is a good deal of false sentiment mixed up with it

all too, while a good many of the remarks one hears are made in the derisive spirit of the following lines:

'Ah, mademoiselle, good-morning!
The piece is old, you'll find—
The sun goes down before us,
And then comes back behind.'

Truly sunrise and sunset are old pieces and have had a long run on this stage; but the spectators are old too, always the same, and as much mixed as they are everywhere else. It is folly, no doubt, to lament it; but poets, as well as a good many other people, do lament it, and are very impatient of the multitude. Some are angry that they cannot be alone, and enjoy the various wonderful effects of sunrise undisturbed; and one, Reithard by name, gives vent to his contempt for the public in the following verse:

'The Frenchman claps his hands with
delight,
The Briton mutters his choicest oaths,
While the German, simply because it's
the fashion,
Will buy for himself an Alpine rose.'

And so they criticise and criticise, and do not see that they themselves are infected by the evil maladies of the age—selfishness, envy, and discontent—which entirely embitter all enjoyment. Is this selfish desire to enjoy things alone the reason why people are beginning to visit the Swiss mountains in the winter as well as in the summer? Nay, it is probably only from a wish to see them under different aspects. Those who have visited the Rigi on a clear frosty day in winter, when all the world around is slumbering beneath the quiet snow, speak with astonishment of the rapture and wonder excited by the startling novelty of the scene—a scene which those who come only in the summer, and are accustomed to see nothing but



ATTISUOLZBAD, NEAR SOLOTHURN.

blue skies, golden cornfields, with flowers, cannot have any
and emerald meadows bedecked idea of.

CHAPTER XI. FROM BASEL TO THE BERNESE OBERLAND.

BASEL on the Rhine is an interesting and beautiful, and also a prosperous town; and, but for Zürich—which is, however, a place of totally different character—it would rank as the first town in Switzerland. But, in any case, Basel is the principal commercial town in Switzerland, and the wealthiest.

In all its features Basel reminds one of a well-to-do merchant of the good old type; one whose face wears an expression of business-like gravity, and yet reflects the cheerful consciousness that his house stands upon a good foundation, and that all his affairs are in the most perfect order; one, too, who possesses a fund of original humour, which, though it may lie dormant on working days, will break out at the right time, to the delight and merriment of his household. In general he is very careful to avoid all luxury; but when there is fitting occasion he will be as well and handsomely dressed as any one. Such, then, is Basel; serious in all matters of business, but otherwise a mirthful town, and one, too, with a strongly-marked republican character, in spite of the sixteenth-century writer, who remarks of Basel, or Basilia, as it was anciently called, 'The name is Greek, and means that the town is royalist.'

An advantageous situation and good fortune have also contributed their share towards raising Basel to its present position. Standing in an angle on the frontiers of Switzerland, France, and Germany, close to the spot where the Rhine first becomes navigable,

and, turning decidedly northwards, affords the town every facility for extending her trade in this direction, the 'Golden Gate of Helvetia,' as it is called, is surrounded by a wide and fertile plain which stretches along both banks of the river, and occupies the space between the Jura, the Black Forest, and the Vosges. Then, too, the railways for all the places in East and West Switzerland; the Alsace-Lorraine lines, which are the chief means of communication with Paris and the north of France; as well as the Baden lines, which place the town in direct communication with the towns of Germany—all converge in Basel. About thirty years ago steamboats used to run to Strasburg, Mannheim, and Mayence; and though these have been quite superseded by the railways, the town owes much to the river, which in former times was of still greater advantage to her. In those days both passengers and merchandise travelled by way of the Rhine, and the river still brings extremely distinguished guests to the Basel banquets, in the shape of splendid salmon, which are far more famous than their cousins in the Elbe and Oder. The fish come up the river in shoals in the month of May; and when they get beyond the town, before they can pass the Laufenburg rapids, they fall a prey to the nets and traps of the Rhine fisherman; and, in fact, they form the most valuable gift the river-god has to bestow.

The Rhine divides Basel into Great and Little Basel, as the Limmat divides Zürich; and for-

merly, as was also the case with the latter town, the division had its political significance, for the Rhine formed the boundary between the bishoprics of Basel and Constance, and it was to the latter that Little or Lesser Basel belonged; indeed, the church of St. Clara, which we pass on crossing the bridge over the Rhine on our way to the Baden railway station, belonged to the diocese of Constance even so lately as 1828, when the new bishopric of Basel was created. Little Basel was but a village in ancient days; but about 1260 it fortified itself with walls and gates and became a town, and in 1285 it received its freedom and municipal rights from the Emperor Rudolf, and it was not until 1392 that Great Basel gained possession of the suburb-like town on the right bank, by the payment of certain sums of money to the bishops and the dukes of Austria. The right bank of the river is quite level here, whereas the left, which is covered with houses quite down to the water's edge, slopes upwards to a height of eighty or a hundred feet above the river. Few changes or additions have been made on either bank; and, as seen from the river, Basel looks like a well-fortified mediæval town, with its stone walls guarding the sloping hills, and the grand minster crowning the whole like a castle or stronghold.

Bidding adieu to Basel, on our way to Bern we pay a hasty visit to the charming canton of Solothurn, or Soleure, with its sunny mountain-slopes and pleasant old towns, and should feel very much inclined to linger there, if the snowy Alps were not beckoning to us from the distance.

There is nothing to detain us in Olten, which is a busy little town filled from morning to night

with the sound of hammers, the roar of machinery, and the rush and rattle of steam-engines. So many lines of railway radiate from Olten that it is constantly in a state of restless bustle, especially in the summer, when thousands of travellers pass through on their way to all the points of the compass. The town stands on the left bank of the Aar, but is spreading rapidly on all sides, and is doing its best to keep up with the requirements of modern times.

Solothurn, the sister town, is also a stirring place, and, like Basel, is outgrowing the ancient walls which once confined it. Its streets are broad, clean, and handsome; and, with its grand squares, plashing fountains, well-kept gardens, shady avenues, and numerous fine buildings, Solothurn has a comfortable air of prosperity. The gray towers, gates, and battlements which still remain look like old brocade on a new dress, and serve to remind us of ancient times; but the ramparts have long since been covered with trees and turned into a promenade for the benefit of the townspeople and their children.

The most ancient relic of the past is the clock-tower, from which, according to some credulous writers, the name of Solothurn is derived. They call the town *Solodurum* or *Solam turrim*, from the isolated position of the tower, whose stones are said to be so firmly cemented together with wine and eggs that it would be a work of great difficulty to demolish it. It is attributed to the Romans; and whether it was actually built by them or not, it is at least certain that Solothurn and Trier, or Treves, share the honour of being the most ancient towns on this side the Alps. This, one would think, might have satisfied the good people; but ap-



parently it did not, for they had a picture painted in which they, the burghers of Solothurn, were represented as standing upon the walls of their town, and looking calmly on while Eve was being fashioned from the rib taken from the side of the sleeping Adam. There are numerous Roman remains both here and in the surrounding neighbourhood. The pleasant bathing establishment of Attisholz, a very favourite resort of the townspeople, situated in the midst of a wood, is particularly rich in remains of ancient buildings and aqueducts. People talk of there having been temples here dedicated to Apis and Atys, and their sites are even pointed out; but as to who Atys was, and whether he was the same with Adonis, the beloved of Venus, whose *cultus* was introduced here by Heliogabalus, nobody knows, and nobody at the present day very much cares, while he can enjoy such a sunny, smiling, wildly-romantic landscape as that through which the Aar rushes. We might even get a view of the Alps from the hill here; but it will be better to go on to the Weissenstein, or White Rock, which, next to the Hasenmatt, is the most lofty elevation of the Eastern Jura, on the slopes of which Solothurn is situated. The Weissenstein is four thousand, the Hasenmatt four thousand one

hundred, feet high; and on the brow of the former is situated the hotel and bath-house, an establishment famous not only for its wonderful view, but for the good effects produced upon invalids by its pure air and the *cure de petit lait*, or course of goats' whey, which is recommended in certain complaints. The Weissenstein would be a worthy rival of the Rigi if it had an equal reputation, for there is a very extensive view of the Alps to be seen from the windows of the hotel. The whole grand chain of snowy peaks may be seen spread out along the horizon, stretching without break from east to west, and comprehending the Sântis, Mont Blanc, and Mont Salève; but, besides this distant view, there is one nearer and equally charming, over a wide extent of country diversified by villages, towns, rivers, roads, mountains, castles, and towers.

The Weissenstein ought to make more noise in the world; but perhaps, like its neighbours of Solothurn, it is too quiet and modest. It might not be a bad advertisement of its attractions if it were to commission one of the pretty girls of the canton to put on her gay holiday costume, not forgetting the red ribbon in her fair hair, and to go out into the world, carrying with her a bouquet of fresh flowers gathered on the summit of the mountain.

(To be continued.)

RUBY.

A Water-colour Sketch, in Six Chapters.

CHAPTER III.

A GREAT deal of what I am about to tell you now I did not of course know of at the time when it actually happened; I was an eye-witness of some, but much of it I never learnt till later.

Whether Ruby scrupulously complied with my request that she would hold no communications with Armand de St. Felix that must be kept a secret from me, I do not know; I cannot but suspect not. She kept me in constant anxiety, which I was forced to conceal as best I might, for I did not wish Mary and Eva to get any knowledge of the cause. As for Ruby herself, she seemed as unconscious of what I suffered for her sake as she was then of the real meaning of the word suffering; singing, dancing, laughing, fascinating by every word and look and gesture, till I was ready to forgive Armand de St. Felix for what I verily believe he could not have helped; while I prayed earnestly that he might love her as truly as she was worthy to be loved. But I was certainly not sorry when our stay in Rome came to a conclusion. At the end of March we rejoined the rest of the family at Cannes, and returning to England shortly after, took up our abode in London.

The weeks and months went on, and I heard no mention of Armand de St. Felix; Ruby told me nothing, and though I watched I could detect no signs of any communication between them. I

sometimes hoped that she had forgotten that episode in her life; sometimes I wondered if he were giving her occasion of suffering; yet neither by look nor speech nor manner did I get any key to the state of Ruby's feelings. She was my sunbeam, my companion, my friend still, the one bright presence on which I can think with thankfulness even now, among so much else that was dull and uncongenial. Once only, while singing to me Beethoven's 'Per pietà non dismi addio,' I fancied that she put a thrilling intensity of feeling into the passionate pleading of the words; I saw the tears almost starting from her eyes, while the pathetic wailing burden of the song made me tremble with an anxious pity for the singer. Yet as she finished she turned to me, with a sweet smile on her lips, saying,

'I have practised to some purpose, I think; for I know I have made you miserable. O, the dramatic profession has suffered a great loss in me; I was born for the stage!'

At last, one morning—I can recall it now—the hot June air, the twittering of the sparrows through the open window, the rustle of the dictionary in Alice's hands, the dull jingle of scales as Nelly plodded up and down the piano, the street-cries that came up from the mews,—that morning which is fresher in my memory than yesterday, Ruby came suddenly into the schoolroom, putting her hands to her ears as if to deprecate the noise of scales at that

moment, and exclaiming, before we had time to question the meaning of her flushed cheeks and her tell-tale eyes,

'Give me joy, all of you ; congratulate me, children, and you too, Miss Campion ; I am engaged to be married.'

The girls cried out in wonderment, while I, in the fulness of my pleasure at the prospect of seeing her safe and happy, jumped up and caught her by the two hands, saying,

'O Ruby, my darling, I am so glad !'

'Yes ; I am engaged to be married,' she repeated, gently extricating herself from my grasp, and looking at me from under her half-closed lids with an expression that puzzled me, 'to—to Sir Robert Debarry.'

I think, though I strove hard to conceal any demonstration of surprise, she must have guessed that this was *not* the sequel to her announcement which I had expected, for she added immediately,

'I am so glad you are pleased : I thought you would be ; but you mustn't look so grave, you know ; this is a matter of *congratulation*.'

I have often wondered whether in those days Ruby was consciously sarcastic, or whether many things come back to me now with the interpretation of the after years put upon them. I do not know whether she spoke that morning in light-hearted merriment or with a terribly truthful irony ; but I can hear the sweet laugh which broke forth as she spoke, just as if she were alive and by my side to peal it forth into my ears.

I was aware that Sir Robert Debarry had been at our house for some time past ; I was also aware that Mrs. Gascoigne hoped against hope that his visits were

for Mary ; while I, recalling what I had noticed many months ago, had my own ideas on the subject, which differed from those of Mrs. Gascoigne. That Sir Robert should have proposed to Rubina was to me no matter of surprise, though it might be to others. I could well believe, for all his coldness and gravity, that the piquancy of her beauty, the genuineness of her nature, had proved the attractions to a man no longer in his first youth. But that Ruby should have accepted Sir Robert, when that meeting with Armand de St. Felix in the Villa Borghese had not belonged to the past more than three months ; that Ruby, such as I knew her, should give her heart to a grave man of forty instead of to a handsome youth, or that she should take a husband for the sake of what he could confer, without caring whether she could give him her love—that was what puzzled me in this matter, that was what made my face so grave and cooled the warmth of my congratulations.

Yet when I came to know it all later there was nothing very unusual in the story. When Sir Robert Debarry first proposed to Ruby, she refused him, and if the affair had not come round to Mrs. Gascoigne's ears, so in all probability it would have ended. But Mrs. Gascoigne, mortified though she was to find her dream for Mary only a delusion, could nevertheless not allow so fair an opportunity for ridding herself of Ruby to slip by. In her eyes it was nothing short of wickedness and a tempting of Providence for a penniless girl to decline an offer of marriage from a man of Sir Robert Debarry's position ; and to others, who can view the matter more dispassionately than I ever shall, there may be something to be said on her side, considering she was ignorant of the existence of Armand de

St. Felix. Not that I had anything to say against Sir Robert Debarry; individually I preferred him infinitely to Monsieur de St. Felix, holding him of the two to be far more calculated to make a woman happy throughout a lifetime. The question was which of the two Ruby really loved, and a woman's devotion is not always regulated by a man's worth.

Mrs. Gascoigne had an interview with Ruby, and did her best to indoctrinate the poor child with her sentiments.

'You cannot surely have considered the matter properly,' she said; 'most girls would think themselves only too fortunate.'

'But I have not been educated like most girls,' observed Ruby.

'No, more's the pity,' said Mrs. Gascoigne; 'but that is your misfortune, perhaps, rather than your fault. However, you should consider all that we have done for you. I have five daughters of my own, and yet when Mr. Gascoigne said that his house must be your home, I never hesitated to receive you.'

Mrs. Gascoigne's desire to get rid of Ruby was owing in a great measure to the insufficient work which could be found for her in the family; Eva could not sing two consecutive notes in tune, Alice was too delicate to attempt to learn, and little Nelly's tuition in music was certainly not more than I could undertake. Rubina knew this perfectly well, for she had mentioned it more than once to me.

'I know I am a burden to you,' she said, in reply to Mrs. Gascoigne; 'I know I've no business here, and I know I can't do enough now even to make myself useful. Let me go away, Mrs. Gascoigne; between my singing and my painting I think I could take care of myself.'

'No, Rubina,' replied Mrs. Gascoigne, 'my husband would

never consent to that; neither would I. You must remember that you *are* a Gascoigne; you must recollect also, if you please, that if we were to let you go away, and take care of yourself by singing or painting, a great odium would attach to *us* in the eyes of the world, which we should probably never be able to shake off. I should have thought that your own sense of what is becoming would have kept you from making such a suggestion.'

'I only suggested it because I don't know what to do,' said Ruby; 'I have a little pride, and I don't like to feel a burden upon you or to stand in Mary's way.'

'O, as for standing in Mary's way, I don't say you do *that*,' said Mrs. Gascoigne; 'but you must consider we have eight children of our own, and Mr. Gascoigne's income is not large. You talk of your pride, you say you don't wish to be a burden on us, you ask to go away, and yet for no reason you refuse Sir Robert Debarry. Now I say that is wrong of you; I say here is a way of properly relieving us of an additional anxiety, here is the *right*, the *reasonable*, the *becoming* way of rendering yourself independent, and of making us some return. If you were my own daughter, my dear Rubina, I should hold precisely the same language, considering the large family we have to bring up, and the position of the man who offers you his hand.'

The substance of this conversation was told to me months afterwards by Mrs. Gascoigne herself. In the course of my life I have learnt much, suffered much, forgiven much. For myself it is not so hard; but for another, for one I loved, not even now, though years have passed, though the earth has closed over my darling's grave, not even *now* can I wholly forgive

that woman for the evil she wrought in her hard worldly-minded selfishness.

Ruby did not yield all at once, but the constant weight of a daily pressure is more than any one can support; they watched her, they scolded, they coaxed, they laughed at her; they wearied her day by day with reflections on her ingratitude and insinuations as to the additional anxiety and expense that she was to them. Yet it was not, you understand, done glaringly, vulgarly, revoltingly; it was not apparent even to my watchful eye. I had no knowledge at the time of the working of the matter, and I was genuinely surprised at Rubina's announcement that she was going to marry Sir Robert Debarry. It was all done by that subtle but terribly effective pressure which Mrs. Gascoigne prided herself she knew how to employ with so much skill. I have not seen her for some years, and I hope I may never see her again; but I sometimes wonder if that face hanging yonder on my wall ever visits *her* in her dreams, and whether those soft eyes and those sweet smiling lips, which to others seem so fair and happy, would look as sad to her as they do to me!

Well, it was a matter of congratulation; everybody took it as such, and I fell in with the rest; Mrs. Gascoigne was supremely happy, Ruby beaming, Sir Robert Debarry in paradise; and reflecting upon what I knew of the man my darling was about to marry, I could see no reason why she should not be happy if her happiness rested solely with him. The more I saw of him the more I liked him; the grave coldness of his manner grew less in the presence of those with whom he was intimate; his chivalrous devotion to Ruby touched me—I felt he

was a man to be trusted, I thought she would be very safe with him. As for Ruby herself, she seemed to have no thought but for the joys of the moment, for the pleasant trifling cares of trousseaux and wedding presents; the fitting on of dresses, the selection of lace, and the attentions of the bridegroom-elect. Yet I never knew—we none of us never knew—what she must have suffered all that time; how each day began with hope and ended with despair, how anxiously every morning she watched for a letter; we none of us ever guessed that so long as there remained a possibility of that letter coming how uncertain it was, even up to the last moment, that Sir Robert Debarry would ever secure her for his wife.

It was a very pretty wedding; no bride ever looked more beautiful than Ruby. She was born to wear satin, lace, and pearls, and all things soft and pretty, and my foolish heart had more than once reflected with pleasure that for the future she would have full scope to indulge her innate taste for the luxuries of dress, unconstrained by the pinching grip of poverty and dependence.

Mrs. Gascoigne was too supremely gratified at the prospect of being relieved so satisfactorily of Rubina to be niggardly in her preparations for the wedding. There was a morbid consciousness always uppermost in her mind of what the world and her neighbours were saying, for she was ever careful to provide things befitting in the sight of all men.

'No one can accuse *me* of partiality,' she said more than once; 'I mean to have everything conducted on precisely the same scale as if it were Mary who is going to be married instead of Rubina.'

Yet she had always known the exact limits of her impartiality—

she had always calculated within a hair's breadth just how much of it was necessary to exhibit before the eyes of the world.

I think I had the last view of Ruby as she drove away from the door; I think the bright look which she gave back as the carriage turned the corner was directed towards me. Anyhow, I like to fancy so. Certainly I was the only one of all those whom she left behind, except perhaps the little children, who felt a pang at parting with her—I was the only one who really cared how she sped, or who yearned that she might be happy.

CHAPTER IV.

NEITHER Sir Robert nor his bride had any wish to spend their honeymoon abroad. They passed a few weeks at the country house of a friend, which had been placed at their disposal, and then went to their own home. It joined Mr. Gascoigne's property, and by a footpath through the woods the two houses did not stand a mile and a half apart. Very often in our walks we used to find ourselves on Sir Robert's land, and of course we had full permission to wander in his beautiful park.

It was towards the end of August. We had seen Ruby more than once since she took possession of her home, and she seemed full of the bustle and arrangement which her new position required. I felt quite happy and satisfied to see her so entirely like her old self, bright and beaming, playful and fascinating as ever.

Mrs. Gascoigne was away with her two elder girls paying a round of visits, when one afternoon Ruby sent me a note, asking if I would come with the children to

lunch with her the next day. She was engaged in fitting up her boudoir, she said, and she wanted our opinion as to whether the furniture should be pink or blue. It was a beautiful evening. Alice and Nelly were going for a ride, and I thought I would take Ruby my answer in person, for I was particularly fond of the walk which led from our house to Barry Park. My way lay first across a succession of grass-fields, then through a magnificent oak-wood, on the other side of which was a little winding stream, with the park stretching beyond. I remember I was thinking of many things—things connected with my own childhood and my broken fortunes long before I had ever known the Gascoignes. I was strolling along, with my eyes on the moss at my feet, when I suddenly caught the sound of voices speaking distinctly. I looked up; I was on the outskirts of the wood, the little stream was before me, and just on the other side, where a yew-tree and a mountain-ash grew together, I saw Lady Debarry—my Ruby—and a stranger. Stranger—no! With another quick glance and a throb at my heart I recognised Armand de St. Felix. They did not perceive me. I could not go on, and I would not go back; I stood riveted to the spot. Whether I did right or wrong I do not pretend to decide, but the impulse was on me to remain.

'I do not know whether it is wrong,' she was saying hurriedly; 'but I know it is fearfully imprudent to give you this meeting here. Yet I could not resist the feeling of—of—well, of *curiosity*—to learn the reason of your long, long silence.'

'And you have been thinking of me as false, heartless, cruel,' he said very humbly, 'when I

have only been unfortunate and ill-fated. Do you believe me?

'I do not know what to believe,' she answered, passing her hand across her brow and turning half away.

'Then listen to me now,' he pleaded; 'listen and judge. You sent me a letter asking me to write—to give some sign that I had not forgotten you, that I had not forgotten those happy, happy days in Rome. That letter has been following me for months, while I have been travelling from place to place. It only reached me a day or two ago, and I have come to you, Ruby, *at once*.'

I did not believe that he spoke truly; it was my conviction of the moment, and though I have never been able to prove it, it is my conviction still.

'And *now*,' she said, 'it is too late.'

I saw him look at her with an expression of agonised bewilderment, not fully realising her meaning. He moved towards her, as though he would have caught both her hands.

'Too late!' he repeated, 'too late! O, surely you will not punish me for a misfortune—for what I could not help! That is not generous, Ruby.'

'Lady Debarry, if you please; not Ruby,' she answered. 'I was married a month ago.'

I saw it all, and I heard it all, O, with such awful clearness! I saw his face of passionate despair, and I saw *hers* just as I had seen it once before when she sang to me 'Per pietà.' *She* devoid of fine-drawn sympathies and deep emotions! Alas, where was my knowledge, where my perception? They appeared to me now all the deeper and all the stronger within her by very reason of their contrast with her usual external de-

meanour. He walked away a few paces, while she stood still under the yew and the ash-tree; then he turned and spoke again:

'And *you* did not trust me, you did not believe in me—you would not wait. And you have forgotten, I daresay, all that you *once* said to me under the ilexes in the Villa Borghese!'

'Monsieur de St. Felix,' she said, looking him full in the face, with reproach in her beautiful eyes, 'it is neither just nor generous in you to remind me *now* of what passed *then*. Fortune has played us a cruel trick—I will even admit that I have been hasty; but what is done is done, and I, at any rate, dare not, *will* not, think of the past.'

'Ah, a woman can always tear the past out of her heart,' he said bitterly; 'but for a man it is not so easy!'

'Chivalrously said,' she answered, and I saw her perfect lip curl with scorn; then with a sudden revulsion of feeling, she said, 'O, do not misjudge me in that harsh manner! What have I done that I should be so cruelly tortured?'

He looked at her very earnestly.

'Let your heart speak the truth,' he said gently; 'do not drown its voice. You cannot put the past from you any more than I.'

O, how I hated the man as I watched him there! How poor, how artificial, how selfish did he seem beside her in her patient self-forgetfulness, her brave acceptance of pain and simple duty! If I had not feared to cause her distress, I would have rushed from my place of concealment; I would have told him that it was both cruel and cowardly to taunt her with the past; I would have asked him why, if his love for her once was not all a sham and a lie, he could not take noble pity on her

now, and leave her for ever. Yes, and I should have got my answer—that he loved her still. I heard him say it; I heard it come low and soft across the water and steal up to my straining ears under the leaves of the spreading oak; and I saw too the quiver of acute agony that crossed my darling's face as she answered, with a gesture half of despair, half of indignation,

‘O, do not say that; it is not language for *me* to hear or for you to speak!’

Then she walked on by the edge of the stream, plucking the meadow-sweet with nervous hand and flinging the blossoms far into the water; and he followed till the shrubs hid them from my view and they had gone past hearing—only a murmur of the insects overhead and a ripple of the stream at my feet. I was alone again with my own thoughts, sad and strange and bewildering!

CHAPTER V.

I WAS uncertain what to think or how to act. I was thoroughly miserable, because I knew so much and yet so little; miserable, because I saw Ruby's happiness shattered and her peace of mind destroyed. Not that I distrusted her, for I knew her to be brave and true; but I felt that her young life was broken. She had been deceived; she had lulled her true feelings to sleep with a half-genuine, half-illusory belief in what could never really exist for her; and now they had been rudely roused again, when the awakening could avail nothing, and shaken to their very depths. Yet I could do nothing for her; true friend though I was, this was no matter in which a friend could interfere to any purpose.

But how should I meet her again with her secret and my knowledge of it between us? I felt so guilty; I felt like one who carries about him the property of another which he has gotten by stealth. I dreaded the next day's visit; I earnestly hoped that something would occur to prevent it; and yet I knew that sooner or later I must meet her, and therefore the sooner the better.

I might have spared myself much of this self-torture, much of this suffering, by anticipation. When I saw Ruby the next day, when she came to greet us in the hall with the old sweet smile on her lips and the old soft light in her eyes; when I heard the low ripple of laughter that I loved so well,—I could hardly believe that this was the same woman I had seen not four-and-twenty hours ago looking duty and anguish straight in the face with a gaze of passionate despair. I watched her in astonishment. Was that pretty captivating manner, which had charmed me and so many others, nothing after all but a mere artificial trick? Or was it so entirely natural that it could not be suppressed, but still must assert its sway in spite of an aching misery at the heart?

The real truth, as I have learnt it since, was, that Ruby was neither hypocritical nor genuinely light-hearted through weal or woe; but she was what she had once described herself to be—an actress, a consummate actress, possessing the high courage of a noble nature which conceals its own feelings and griefs for the sake of those whom it loves or to whom it owes a duty. And Sir Robert Debarry was just the man to touch such a nature; he was so gentle, so kind, so unselfish, so wrapped up in Ruby's every word and look and gesture, that she shrank from giv-

ing him pain, from letting him suspect she could not return his love to the full, that she had any cause of sorrow in which he could have no share.

'How very kind he is!' I said, as she and I sat together under the limes on the lawn, while Sir Robert was rowing the children on the water.

'I like to hear you say that,' she answered, with her sweetest and quietest smile; and I know she spoke the truth, though the image of Armand de St. Felix could never be wholly effaced from her memory.

I do not think that I should ever have confessed to Ruby all that I had seen and heard by the stream in the oak-wood if circumstances had not been so ordered that I recognised it as a duty to do so. Mrs. Gascoigne, during one of her many visits, had met Monsieur de St. Felix, and charmed with his manners, his conversation, his appearance, above all with his position as one of the *haute noblesse*, she invited him to stay at her house—an invitation which he accepted with an alacrity due less, I should fancy, to the charms of his hostess or her daughters than to the prospect of being in close vicinity to Ruby. I was very startled when I heard that he was expected, and puzzled what to do for the best; and, after much anxious reflection, finding that I could not by any possibility hinder his coming, I was convinced of the necessity of warning Lady Debarry. Then, having resolved upon so much, I felt impelled to tell her honestly how much more than she suspected I really knew. I did not pause to turn over my resolution, and look at it from every point of view till I wavered; I wrote her a note at once, telling her I should have a free afternoon next day,

and asking if she could see me. Her answer came:

'Dear Frances,—You know you are always welcome. Come by all means. Sir Robert will be away at quarter sessions; so I shall be alone.—Yours affectionately,
R. D.'

So I went, and found her there to greet me with her ready smile and gentle kiss; then she brought two garden-chairs, and, placing them under the limes, insisted that we should sit in the shade and enjoy the soft warm air as it blew over the water.

'Isn't it lovely here?' she said, pointing to the lake with drooping trees at its edge, the undulating ground beyond, and the soft blue hills in the distance. 'Can't you fancy how my artist-soul revels in all this—the purple and the blue, the deep green of the oaks, and the bright yellow of the fern? And to think that I of all people in the wide world should have it for my home!'

'I think you are just the one of all others to appreciate it,' I answered. 'It is not every woman who would love it for its mere beauty.'

'Ah!' she said; 'but to think that I should drop down safely at last into such a haven of rest as this! Well, they say this is a world of compensations; and perhaps Fortune thought she had made a shuttlecock of me too long.'

You may fancy that she spoke with an affectation of levity, and that an undercurrent of irony was perceptible; but I assure you that, even knowing all I did, I could not detect the slightest bitterness in her tone.

'You know,' I said, 'that no one is more rejoiced than I that you have safely reached your haven of rest, no one is more sin-

côrely glad to see you happy in your own home.'

She looked at me rather quaintly from under her half-closed lids (I was observing her very intently), raised her eyebrows slightly, smiled, and said, with the faintest possible shrug of the shoulders,

'I don't think I quite deserve it all. I was a foolish, thoughtless, tiresome thing, wasn't I? Confess now, Frances, that I used to give you a deal of trouble.'

'You were a great comfort to me,' I answered sadly. 'You were the one green spot in the desert of my drudging existence.'

'O, I can't let you use such flowery language as that,' she said, laughing; 'I must sing you one of the old songs to cheer you up. See how I have been spending my morning.' And she picked up from the grass her drawing-book, in which was a half-finished sketch of the charming scene before us. 'I'm quite in a rage with my stupidity,' she continued; 'but I *cannot* make anything of it. English scenery is only fit to be looked at.'

'It is not so easy to put on paper as Italian, I suppose,' I answered. 'Do you remember that sweet little sketch of the Villa Borghese that you once gave me?'

'O, I remember; it was a peace-offering,' she said, with a low laugh, stooping down to fondle her Maltese terrier.

'Yes, indeed,' I replied; 'you used me very ill that day.' Then I added, with an air of sudden recollection and an affectation of indifference which I supported poorly enough, 'By the way, do you know Mrs. Gascoigne met Monsieur de St. Felix last week?'

'Ah, is he in England?' she said carelessly; but I think her cheek turned a shade paler.

'Yes,' I continued; 'and Mrs. Gascoigne has invited him for a few days. He is expected to-morrow.'

I am *not* an actress; Nature has not made me one, and study never will. I have no power to conceal my feelings or to control my voice; and on this occasion I felt, and consequently looked, so uncomfortable and spoke so nervously that Ruby turned towards me with a gentle expression of surprise; but all she said was,

'Really!'

There was a short pause, during which I debated whether or not I should speak further. Of course, so long as she believed that I knew no more than others, she would retain her external calm indifference; but to confess the truth would be an immense satisfaction to myself as a friend.

'Ruby dear,' I said, with a sudden plunge, 'there is something which I think in fairness I ought to confess to you—something which I don't think I am justified in hiding from you any longer. I saw you and Monsieur de St. Felix the other day by the stream.'

She looked up and met my gaze with an expression both serious and searching; but she did not appear angry, neither did her mouth quiver or her hand tremble.

'Well?' was all she asked, very quietly.

'I came upon you suddenly,' I continued hurriedly, 'and I was afraid you might be annoyed if you saw me; so I stood still where I was. I heard some of what passed between you; but I did not think it fair to deceive you about it any longer.'

I was thankful when I had said it—thankful that the confession was over, and that there was now nothing on my conscience incom-

patible with the character of a true friend ; but I was distressed as I watched the effect which it produced on her. She would not put off the smile from her face, but it was like a gleam of sunshine on a stormy day. The recollection of that interview with Armand de St. Felix, combined with the consciousness that she was in the presence of an eye-witness of her great grief, made sad havoc with her feelings, seeming to me the more intense from the terrible effort with which, now all too visibly, she strove to conceal her real emotion. She did not answer me ; not, I am certain, because she had nothing to say, or because she feared being betrayed into saying too much, but because she knew she could not control her trembling voice, because no reply sufficiently careless, sufficiently indifferent, suggested itself at that moment. I tried to divert her from a sense of her present self-concentrated pain by treating the matter solely from my point of view, and accusing myself before her.

'You are very, very angry with me, I see,' I said. 'I did wrongly, dear, I admit ; but if I may plead anything it must be my deep interest and anxiety for whatever concerns you.'

She was pacing slowly up and down the grass, but as I spoke she came and stood before me, and laying her two hands on my shoulders, said,

'Do you think me a mere senseless, ungrateful, inanimate block of stone, Frances, that I should be angry with *you* ? Are you not the truest, the *only* friend I have ever known ? and can you believe that I could be angry with you for what, at the very worst, was only a little bit of indiscretion on your part ? For shame, dear ! you do me injustice.' And with

a smile she tapped me playfully on the cheek.

O, that dreary, dreary winter smile ! O, the ghastliness to me of that forced expression of the lips seen in contrast with the genuine painful yearning of her sweet soft eyes ! I put my arms round her and drew her head on my shoulder. Of what use was I as a friend if her eyes must keep bright and tearless in my presence, if her poor sore heart must struggle to belie the anguish with which it throbbed ?

'O Ruby ! Ruby !' I cried, 'with your truest, your *only* friend, who knows all the past and all you are suffering, where is the need to wear a mask ? The pride or the courage, or the sense of duty—whatever it is that impels you to hide your deep sorrow under an artificial gaiety, may impose upon others, but it can impose upon *me* no longer, since I saw your face of agony as you walked by the stream the other day. Cry your heart out, my darling ; it will do you more good than that cold and cheerless smile. You need fear no blame, no reproaches, no harsh reflections from me ; my heart is full of love and sympathy and pity !'

O, I was so thankful when I felt her sobbing in my arms ! Tears are the natural vent for the heart's sorrow, and sympathy is the surest means of drawing tears. I did not wish her to confide in me if her innate reserve prompted her to silence. I did not want to hear the history of all she had suffered through Armand de St. Felix's selfish trifling. I was glad to be spared the reproaches she might heap upon herself. I simply wanted her to forget, for the moment, that there was any one else in the world but me to read her heart in her words and looks. I wanted her to enjoy the luxury of grief.

And in those few moments, when I learnt to know Ruby in her womanly weakness, when she learnt to appreciate me for my sympathetic pity,—in those few moments, when neither of us spoke, save in the silent language of the heart, the bond of that friendship which had begun when first we met was sealed and strengthened with a firmness that death itself has not had the power to tear asunder.

CHAPTER VI.

ARMAND DE ST. FELIX came, and Mrs. Gascoigne invited a party of neighbours to meet him at dinner, amongst others Sir Robert and Lady Debarry. In my quiet unobtrusive way I am a student of human nature, and I observed with a mingled scorn and amusement the gradual change which had come over the Gascoignes in their dealings with their cousin now that she was no longer 'only Ruby,' but Lady Debarry. They brought her name and her connection with themselves prominently forward where formerly they had thrust it into the background; they welcomed her to their house with kisses; they received her hospitality with an intense satisfaction. Ruby herself was not cynically inclined, and being by nature one of the sweetest-tempered and most courteous of beings, she never brought home to their consciences the difference which she must have detected as the result of her changed position.

I wondered whether she would accept this particular invitation to dinner, and when I knew she had done so, I still wondered whether she would keep to her resolution, or whether she would deem it wisest and best to invent some excuse at the last moment. I

know what I should have done under similar circumstances; but my courage and conduct were certainly no test of hers, and I was not really surprised when I found that she came. What sort of a greeting passed between her and Monsieur de St. Felix I shall never know for certain, for I was not there to see: whether they met as strangers or as old acquaintances, whether they bowed stiffly or whether each touched the other's hand, how he looked or how she spoke, will remain a secret from me for ever. I only know that when after dinner she entered the drawing-room in company with the other ladies she looked sweeter, brighter, more smiling, if possible, than usual. And yet it was not due to anything that could have passed between her and Armand de St. Felix during dinner; I gathered that from a remark made *sotto voce* within my hearing by Mrs. Gascoigne to her daughter Mary.

'So stupid and tiresome of Rubina! I particularly told her she was to sit on the other side of Monsieur de St. Felix, that he might have some one next him who could talk French well; and she deliberately went and sat three seats below him. She quite put party out, and I call it giving herself great airs.'

I have sometimes reflected whether, if I could, I *would* be an actress like Ruby; it is such a bitter lonely thing! Of all the people assembled that evening in Mrs. Gascoigne's drawing-room, Lady Debarry was perhaps the very last that others would have looked upon with pity; and in the midst of all those who either admired or envied her, who cited her as a never-failing specimen of good-humour and light-heartedness, and who considered her position as a piece of rare good luck, she was as alone and as far

removed from all human sympathy as any captive staring at the sunshine across his prison-bars.

Ruby had just sat down to the piano when the gentlemen entered the room. According to my wont I had withdrawn to a quiet corner with my work, and as I had no particular wish to exchange greetings with Armand de St. Felix I was not sorry that he failed to recognise me; but I had full opportunity of watching him. Considering the circumstances under which he had made Ruby's acquaintance, it was hardly possible that he could ever have heard her sing; indeed I judged of the new surprise which broke upon him by the expression of his face at the sound of the first few notes which she uttered. I saw him start slightly with a murmured exclamation of astonished delight, while his gaze was riveted upon her with an intensity that seemed to ignore any other presence.

Whether Ruby herself was aware of that gaze, who shall say? but it was very unusual for her to break off in the middle of a song, declaring that the east wind had affected her voice, that her upper notes were all flat, and that she could not sing a bit, just too when she was singing to the entire satisfaction of a not very critical audience. A murmur of lamentation ran through the company as she jumped up from the music-stool, a general chorus of supplication, in which all particular protests were lost, —all except one, which seemed to float away from the rest, and to reach my ears with a peculiar distinctness:

'The wind has been in the south-west all day, madame, I assure you.'

'But it may have changed in the last half hour, monsieur; there are no people so sensitive to climate as singers, you know.'

The laugh with which she pointed her repartee was, I doubt not, to all other ears, sweet and musical and ringing; only to us three—to him, and to her, and to me—it was like a mournful dirge, the knell of a weary and a broken spirit.

Sir Robert Debarry was sitting near me, and at this sudden vagary on the part of his wife he leaned across the sofa, and said to her in a low and anxious tone,

'Ruby dear, is anything the matter? I could not detect anything wrong with your voice.'

'You think I am very fanciful, I daresay,' she answered, in caressing accents. 'Well, perhaps I am; but I have a certain reputation to keep up, you see, and I'm rather conceited. Seriously, though, the heat has knocked me up; I've got quite a headache.'

'Then you would rather go home, wouldn't you?' he asked tenderly; 'there is no need to stay.' She shook her head.

'We will stay till eleven,' she said; 'I would rather not make any more fuss, please.'

Then she moved away to talk to one of the guests, and I saw Sir Robert watch her with a wistful puzzled look. Not that he had the smallest suspicion, I am certain, of the right key to the true state of her feelings; but with his tenderness for all that concerned her immediate welfare there was mingled, I fancied, a little doubt as to whether the caprice of the moment had been the result of sensations purely physical.

I had not witnessed the greeting that passed between Armand de St. Felix and Lady Debarry, neither was I present when they parted, for he followed her out into the hall, and did not return to the drawing-room till the sound of her carriage-wheels had died away on

the gravel; but when he did return, I scanned his countenance with much curiosity. It was not a face I had ever liked, though that it was a face which a woman might passionately love I could well understand; but at that moment I could think of nothing about it except that it frightened me. Whether it was expressive of the intensest love or the deadliest hate I could not decide; probably the two contrasted passions were so blent together that neither had an existence separate from the other. I trembled as I saw it. So long as that evil face with the long dark eyes and the serpent smile was free to haunt our woods and fields, there could be no peace of mind, no security from torture for my poor, brave, suffering Ruby! And that the fault should all be his! That he should have trifled with her love; that he should have kept her waiting and wondering and hoping, when a word would have sealed her happiness; that he should seek her *now*, when if suffered to forget him she might yet have been happy in the pure true love of another; that he should foster his love for her *now* when it was all too late, when every look from his eyes, every word from his lips, could only cause her a cruel pang of remorse—O, for her, my darling, I hated him with such a hatred as I cannot believe is wrong!

Next day I happened to go into the drawing-room while the children were out. There was no one there; but a portfolio of drawings lay open on the table, which I instantly guessed to be those of Monsieur de St. Felix, brought down for exhibition to Mrs. Gascoigne. I began turning them over with some curiosity, much struck with his talent. They were mostly water-colour or pencil sketches, some from Nature, some

copies, some evidently intended merely as designs for larger pictures; there were also a few crayon drawings, probably portraits, and some clever little pen-and-ink caricatures. These last were done in a common sketch-book; and as I lifted it to examine them closer a loose drawing slipped out from between the leaves and fluttered on to the floor. It fell face downwards, and as I stooped to pick it up, turning it round to see what was the subject of the picture, I found myself face to face with a portrait of Ruby. It was her very self,—her sweet lips just parting with the ever-ready smile, her dark eyes, so bright, so soft, so bewitching; it was just as I had seen her look a thousand times, it was just what a portrait should be.

‘I would give anything to have a sketch of her like this!’ I exclaimed aloud, without any thought of the artist, or how or where he had made the picture, without any idea either that he was standing close behind me.

‘You are quite welcome to keep it, mademoiselle,’ he said courteously, ‘if you would like to do so; but I wish it were better done, and worthier of your acceptance.’

I started on finding him so close to me, and said hurriedly,

‘I did not hear you come in, and I beg your pardon for disturbing your things; but *may* I keep this,—really? O, thanks, so very, very much!’

I was too delighted at the prospect of possessing such a treasure not to accept the offer with eagerness, though I could not help wishing that any one else had been the artist. He took the picture from my hand, looked at it steadily for a moment, blew off some specks of dust, and returned it to me with a grave bow. I was still turning over the portfolio.

'What a pleasure it must be to draw so well as you do, monsieur!' I said enthusiastically, forgetting for the moment my dislike of the man in my admiration of the artist; 'I would give anything to be able to do it. And it is really a privilege to be allowed to look at such exquisite bits of life and Nature.'

'But you,' he said a little sadly, — 'you can always have that privilege; Lady Debarry is a far truer artist than I.'

The tone in which he spoke, and the mention of her name, reminded me of something beyond the actual present; and my feelings of the previous evening came rushing back upon me. I looked again at Ruby's portrait, and asked,

'You did this from recollection, I suppose?'

'Recollection!' he repeated — 'well, yes; that is to say, I caught the *expression* once when she was painting in the Palazzo Corsini; but the rest I have worked up from memory.'

I took my prize away and set it up before me on my table in the schoolroom, but that I decided should not be its final resting-place. I would get a pretty simple frame for it, and then it should hang in my bedroom, and smile at me every morning when I woke. Ruby's portrait, with Armand de St. Felix's name beneath it as the painter, would be to me like an unwritten poem, — a constant memorial of the little dramatic romance which had woven itself into the threads of my quiet existence; but it would be something more. It would be a compensation, slight, indeed, but still a compensation, for the bright face whose presence at my side I missed so much; it would be a companion in the many hours I was doomed to spend alone; it would go with me and be my friend when time and circum-

stances would probably have put leagues between me and my darling.

Thinking after this fashion, and absorbed in the pretty little work of art before me, I was rather startled when the original herself came suddenly into the room. She had driven over in her pony-carriage to see Mrs. Gascoigne on some local business, and that lady being out she came to the school-room to charge me with a message. Finding me unmistakably in the act of adoration, she came close up to my side to inspect the object of my worship.

'Me!' she exclaimed. 'Why, Frances, you clever hidden genius, have you achieved this?'

'Not I,' I answered. 'I found it in Monsieur de St. Felix's portfolio, and he gave it to me. Don't you see his name in the corner?'

I was almost sorry so soon as I had said it, but what could I do? I could not unblushingly appropriate so artistic a performance as the work of my own hand. Ruby turned very pale. I saw her brows bent and her lips tightly compressed as she held the picture between her two hands scrutinising it closely. She did not at that moment take the trouble to conceal that some conflict was raging within her, though I could not accurately divine the current of her thoughts.

'He has done it from memory?' she asked abruptly.

'He sketched it in the Palazzo Corsini,' I answered, 'and finished it afterwards.'

Again she fastened her eyes upon it; and then all of a sudden, with a movement so rapid that I had not the time to arrest her action, she tore it across and across into four pieces.

'Ruby!' I cried, in dismay, 'what have you done? The picture was mine, and you don't

know how I valued it ;' and the tears started to my eyes with vexation as I sprang forward to regain the torn fragments. But she made a quick backward movement, and thrust them between the bars of the grate ; then, turning to me, and taking hold of both my hands, she said,

'The picture was yours, but it was a portrait of *me* ; I would not let you keep it with *his* name upon it. Frances dear, forgive me if I have grieved you very much ; but, O, if I didn't do something savage sometimes I think my thoughts would drive me mad !'

'But I would have put it away in my own room,' I said, 'and no one should have seen it but myself.'

'Ah, no,' she answered gently, 'you would have forgotten sometimes ; you would have been so proud to possess so good a painting ; you would have shown it to a friend some day ; you could not have helped it. Dear Frances, believe me, it is better destroyed—better for *me*.'

She was kneeling before me, with her two arms resting on my knees ; I stooped down and kissed her sweet, earnest, pleading face.

'Of course,' she continued after a pause, springing up and speaking more passionately, 'of course I know that there are many more sheets of paper on which *my* face and *his* name are traced together ; but I can only deal with the matter—this bitter, hard, cruel matter—I can only deal with it as I find it ; I cannot do more, can I ?'

'No, dear,' I answered soothingly ; 'but how can you possibly be sure that M. de St. Felix has other portraits of you by himself ?'

She gave a dreary half smile and a shrug of her shoulders as she answered,

'He would not have parted with that one if he had not had others that he valued more.'

I felt this to be true ; and, in spite of all that Ruby had said and done, I had a lingering half-formed idea of trying to replace what she had destroyed. But she either guessed my thoughts or anticipated my intention.

'But promise me one thing, Frances,' she said : 'you will *never* ask him for another ; promise me that faithfully as a *friend*.'

Driven up into a corner like that, and awed by the intense seriousness of her look and tone, I could not refuse her appeal.

'Very well,' I said humbly, 'I will promise. But, Ruby, what am I to say if he finds that the picture is gone ?'

Her voice was very soft, but clear and almost painfully firm, as she answered,

'Tell him the truth ; tell him it is destroyed, and that *I* did it ; tell him, too, that I said it was best.'

Then she turned and went out of the room without another word.

One day, not long after this, I received a parcel directed to me in Lady Debarry's handwriting, and on opening it I found a portrait of Ruby painted by herself in water-colours, and bearing her initials R. D. in the corner ; it was framed and glazed, and was accompanied by a graceful touching little note from the artist and donor.

To me it was even sweeter than the one I had lost ; for the side-long look of the eyes, that almost inevitable result of a portrait taken from reflection in a mirror, imparted a bewitching roguish expression, which recalled to my mind Ruby as I knew her in the days when I had not learnt to guess at the sorrows of her heart. And then overlaying that playful smile with the look of anguish that I had beheld *once* since, contrasting the grief endured with the light-heartedness expressed, I could

see her like life—see her as I, and perhaps *only* I, knew her really to be.

There it is hanging yonder on my wall, even a completer poem than the portrait that bore the name of Armand de St. Felix as the painter. Now you can understand why, though to others it seems only a sweet and smiling face, to *me* it is one of the saddest. It is an epitaph, too, that little water-colour sketch, for she is dead now, my dear one so tried and so true; the violets and snow-drops grow thick over her grave, and Barry Park has been shut up these two years because the heart of Sir Robert is as desolate as his hearth. That is the end of my story; a sad one, is it not Annie? Ah, young things like you, fresh to the real joys and sorrows of life, little guess how much that is bitter and harsh and sad may under-

lie what is seemingly sweet and smooth and happy!

'And Monsieur de St. Felix?' asked Annie, 'what became of him?'

'I have not seen him since that visit when he gave me the picture. He left abruptly one day after I had given him Lady Debarry's message. I have heard of him once or twice; he was not so devoted to art for art's sake as she in her blind admiration once believed; he gave up painting, and married an American lady with a very large fortune.'

'Married!' cried Annie, in a voice of indignant surprise.

'Yes,' I answered; 'you must remember this is a true story I have been telling, and I cannot make it end just as I please; and, after all, it was best so perhaps. Ruby dead—Armand de St. Felix married—so wags the world!'

THE ORKNEYS AS HOLIDAY GROUND.

THE Orkney and Shetland Islands generally receive scant justice at the hands of the map-makers. The two groups, as if they were useless baggage belonging to Great Britain, are squared off in corners to right or left at the top or bottom of the maps. Hence school-children, unless they are blessed with very conscientious masters, have often only a dim idea where these islands actually lie. If the question as to their precise position were pointedly put by any of H.M.'s inspectors of schools, the reply might probably be that they were situated somewhere in the English Channel, or away in the North Atlantic, outside the Hebrides. Indeed, I have heard Pomona, or the mainland of Orkney, mistaken for Mona or the Isle of Man. Equally dim are southern notions regarding the distance between the Orkney and Shetland groups. From the way in which they are occasionally talked about, one might be led to imagine that they are intermingled; whereas Kirkwall, the chief town of Orkney, is one hundred miles distant from Lerwick, the chief town of Shetland.

But any haziness that may exist with respect either to the situation or the characteristics of these northern groups can easily be dissipated by paying them a visit in the summer or autumn months. And it is indeed an easy matter now compared with what an excursion to such remote regions might have been in the days when the motive-power of steam was unknown. Time was when Orcadians made their wills

before venturing south of the Pentland Firth, and when Londoners would as soon have thought of going to Reikjavik or Spitzbergen as to Kirkwall or Lerwick.

The tourist, according to his likings, has now a choice of routes to the Orkney Islands. He can voyage all the way from London by steamer, changing ship in the Forth or at Aberdeen; and he can also take the rail direct from the metropolis to Thurso, which is the most northerly town in Scotland, and from which a steamer carrying the mails sails 'every lawful day' to Stromness, one of the two chief ports in Orkney. The railway route presents the attraction, especially on the Highland line, of a run through magnificent scenery, including the famous pass of Killiecrankie; but much also may be said in favour of the sea route, as the principal vessels of the North of Scotland and Orkney and Shetland Steam Navigation Company, which sail twice a week from Granton Harbour (Edinburgh) and Aberdeen, are at once commodious and comfortable. The tourist who goes on board the steamship *St. Magnus* or *St. Nicholas* has the double advantage of seeing the wild picturesqueness of the eastern seaboard of Scotland, and of making acquaintance *en route* with Orcadians and Shetlanders who are returning home from visits of business or recreation to southern cities and towns. There are always plenty of companionable people in the saloons of these steamers, which present a very cheerful appearance after night-

fall, when the lamps are lighted, and when games at cards or draughts, with toddy accompaniment, are being played by various groups of passengers. Of course the intending *voyageur* must take into account the possibility of the advent of stormy weather, which would give quite another side to the picture just drawn of pleasantness and peace; but bad passages are by no means common during the months of June, July, August, and September, and the entire sail between Granton and Kirkwall, allowing for detentions, is generally accomplished in about thirty hours. The steamers, after landing a portion of their living and dead freight at Kirkwall, proceed on their voyage to Lerwick, and call again at the Orcadian port on their return voyage southwards.

So much for the means of transit. Now to the main point. What attractions has Orkney to show that can recompense the tourist for a railway run of some seven hundred miles, with the addition of a sail across the unstable Pentland Firth, or for a voyage long enough, when the start is made from Granton, to necessitate the passing of a night at sea? The attractions are numerous, and I shall refer first to those of

THE SCENERY.

On getting past the bold cliffs and outlying 'stacks' or sea monoliths of Duncansby Head, you are soon able to realise the distinctive features of the scenery of the Orkades. From Stroma and the Pentland Skerries—reefs of rocks, provided with a fine lighthouse, lying in the mouth of the Pentland Firth—your eye wanders onwards to South Ronaldsay, and you can see at a glance from your 'coign of vantage' on the bridge, which is the captain's promenade,

that the islands, whatever their interior characteristics may be, present defiant fronts of wave and weather-worn cliffs to the beleaguering ocean. On the west side of the group, *vid* Thurso (Scrabster Pier) and Stromness, the effect of a first approach to the islands is greatly enhanced by the superb view of the rock-wall of Hoy, or the High Island, rising upwards of 1000 feet in sheer ascent from the level of the sea. The cliffs on the east side which the steamer passes on its way to the String, the river-like sound that leads into Kirkwall Bay, are not nearly so lofty; but this comparative tameness is counter-balanced to some extent by the wild and lonely aspect of Copen-say and its 'Horse,' which rear their massive forms to seawards at a short distance from the Moul Head of Deerness, the district so named forming the most easterly part of Pomona or the Orkney mainland.

Viewed from the 'out-sea,' as the Norsemen called the encompassing ocean, the islands present a picture of Nature, not merely in the nude, but bare to the very bones. The abounding rocks are the fleshless ribs of the disjointed land. For the semblance of trees and shrubs, and the pleasant spectacle of cultured fields, the tourist must wait patiently until he has steamed from the eastern out-sea or the western out-sea into the 'in-sea' of Kirkwall or Stromness Bays, and he will then come to understand that the islands are Janus-faced, turning a gracious countenance to their friends and a stern aspect to their foes. There is assuredly a striking contrast between the ruggedness of the exterior ramparts of cliffs and the softness of the scenery in the interior, where fields of grass and grain first mottle the slopes of the

low brown hills, then spread over the lower grounds, and finally dip down into the waters of firths and bays.

Travellers can make choice between the two faces, according to their respective tastes. But those who have been more accustomed to the beautiful in scenery than to the stern and wild—to lovely islands, like Helen's in Loch Katrine, that reflect their pendulous birchen tresses in the mirror of still waters—ought to enjoy, by sheer force of contrast, the excitement of boating excursions under the shadow of beetling cliffs, whose layers of ledges, hundreds of feet overhead, are the favourite haunts and homes of all manner of sea-birds. The rock-scenery of Orkney may have nothing to equal in striking picturesqueness the Drongs of Shetland; but it presents in many places strange, imposing, and even weird configurations, some of the most noted of which are the Old Man of Hoy, North Gaulton Castle, near Stromness, and the Castle of Jesnaby, on the coast of Sandwick. Some of the terminal nesses or promontories bear a remarkable resemblance to the heads and trunks of gigantic elephants; and indeed a fertile fancy, especially when twilight casts a 'glamour' over the eyes, may mould the rocks into semblances of petrified beasts, fishes, fiends, and men. The Old Man of Hoy resembles 'a giant that hath warred with heaven,' and stares right onward, not like the Sphinx, with 'calm eternal eyes,' but with gaping sockets that are veritably stone-blind. Interest is also added to the exploration of rock-scenery by the numerous helyers or inlets, caves frequented by rock-pigeons, and 'gloops,' or openings through the rocks, that serve as funnels for the escape of the smoke-like spray driven far up

by the dashing waves in days of storm.

It is, however, from the summits of the highest hills—such as the Ward Hill of Hoy, which rises upwards of 1500 feet in height; the Ward Hill of Orphir; Wideford Hill, in the immediate vicinity of Kirkwall; or Kierfa Hill, in Rousay—that the finest effects of the island scenery come under the eyes of the spectator. There is something inexpressibly exhilarating in the vast extent of the prospect, as seen from the top of the Ward Hill of Hoy, which is the highest point in the islands. Describing the magnificent scene, the author of *Summers and Winters in the Orkneys* says: 'Now we stand upon the bald crown of the hill, with our backs to the Western Ocean, and lo! the whole Orcadian Archipelago, with its islands, holms, stacks, and skerries, lies at our feet like the scattered fragments of some ingenious and particoloured toy-map. It would be difficult to match the spectacle in fineness and unexpectedness of scenical effect. There is in it something dreamy, aerial, mystical, unreal. We seem to be looking down upon isle and islet, cape and bay, from the car of a balloon or the balcony of a lofty tower. The far hum of the sea, stealing through the silence of summer noon, deepens the dreamy impressiveness of the scene.' It is from such an elevated spot that the curious and often fantastic configurations of the islands, varying greatly in dimensions, are best realised. The island of Sanday bears a striking resemblance in shape to the mythologic great dragon, Stronsay to a mammoth lobster, and Shapinsay to a monster crab. Lying in the confluence of two great oceans—the Atlantic and the German Ocean—and bearing the brunt of tremendous

storms from all points of the compass, the poor battered islands show palpable marks of the endless conflict they have sustained for untold ages with the unconquerable seas. The bays, the voes, the helyers are all so many gaping wounds, and one begins to fear, on surveying their sadly-shattered condition, that they are doomed to disappear by piecemeal, leaving only the grim Old Man of Hoy, standing solitary in the sea, as the melancholy memorial of the vanished group.

Of course it is pleasantest to be on the hilltops of Pomona, or Hoy, or Rousay in sunshiny weather; but the islands lying around look their grandest when there is a stiff wind on, and when the rush of roused waters along sounds, against headlands, over skerries, and into crescent bays fringes all the shores with white seething foam. The course of the strong and rapid tide-races or 'roosts,' as they are called, which add to the dangers of navigation in Orcadian seas, is also most clearly distinguishable in windy weather by the rough-and-tumble movements of the boiling and breaking waves. The spectator, far off from the scene of commotion, knows that the waves are 'roaring into cataracts,' though distance softens and mellowes the sound to his ears. If the visitor to Orkney wishes to enjoy the full luxury of a tingling sensation, let him put himself in the hands of native boatmen—who know well how to handle tiller, oars, or sails—for the excitement of a plunging dash right through the heart of one of these seething roosts. It will be memorable as a novel experience.

June and July are decidedly the two best months of the year to spend in the Orkneys. The ruddy gleam which the sun at setting leaves behind in the sky

lingers on for hours, until the evening mingles with the morning twilight. The red radiance of the heavens, reflected in firths and bays, causes so much effulgence that it is possible, in the finest weather, to read a book or newspaper in the open air at midnight. Indeed, midnight is quite a misnomer, as skylarks may be heard singing at that hour, and landrails 'craiking' in the cornfields. If the islands could only show the outlines of palm-trees and bananas on their ridges, they would have almost a tropical look in the mellow glow of the mingling light of sunset and sunrise.

ANTIQUITIES.

Orkney is peculiarly rich in ancient relics, which possess an interest even for those who are not members of the archaeological societies. The antiquities include Picts houses or brochs, cairns, standing stones, Norse grave-mounds, and the ruins of churches, palaces, and castles. These are, for the most part, the still visible footprints of the aboriginal Celtic inhabitants—called Picts from the custom they had of staining their skins blue—and of the conquering Norsemen, who held possession of the islands from the time of Harold the Fairhaired till they were annexed to Scotland in the reign of James III.

The tourist who is desirous of inspecting the chief objects of interest in the islands should fix his head-quarters during his stay either at Kirkwall or Stromness. The scenery in the immediate vicinity of the latter town, situated on a pleasant land-locked bay in the western district of Pomona, is certainly superior to the surroundings of the Orcadian capital; but there is the attraction in Kirkwall of the fine old cathedral, which was built by the

Northmen, and of the ruins of the earls' and bishops' palaces, which testify to the former greatness and importance of this ancient royal burgh. Another advantage connected with taking up quarters in this town lies in the circumstance that the steamship *Orcadia* makes bi-weekly sailings between Kirkwall Pier, which is a handsome iron structure, and the principal islands in the northern division of the group. This inter-insular communication by steam is a great improvement upon the previous system, when the sailing packets that conveyed passengers and goods tacked about from east to west and from west to east in the most tedious manner, often wasting half a day in getting over two or three miles of their course. It is not surprising that a visitor, tired with the tedium of the sail in those days, and unacquainted with the mysteries of tacking, should have loudly expressed disgust at the devious ways of Orcadian boatmen, when they could have got on much better, in his estimation, by steering the packet in a straight line.

The aspect of quaint antiquity imparted to Kirkwall by the narrowness of the main mile-long flag-paved street, and the higgledy-piggledy structure of many of the houses, some of which have their crow-stepped gables where the frontages should be, is capped by the central group of the venerable cathedral, still outwardly entire with the exception of a portion of the tower, and the crumbling remains of the adjoining palaces, which were once the palatial residences of the earls and bishops of Orkney. The last vestige of the castle of Kirkwall,

'Where erst St. Clair bore princely sway
O'er isle and islet, strait and bay,'

was swept out of existence a few

years ago in order to make room for some needed improvements in the town, and an inscription on the front of the Castle Hotel now marks the site where the lordly fortress once stood. Of the two palaces only enough is left to show that they must once have been structures combining great solidity with the elegancies of mediæval architecture. But it is the cathedral that forms the chief boast and pride of Kirkwall. Its lofty vaulted roof, its superb arches, its double row of massive pillars, and the exquisite workmanship of its doors and windows never fail to awaken the interest and excite the admiration of visitors. Though this noble pile was founded by Earl Rognvald, or Ronald, about the year 1130, and dedicated to St. Magnus, the patron saint of Orkney, it did not attain its present proportions till three centuries later, when the last additions were made to it by Bishop Reid, who was also the founder of the University of Edinburgh. The most interesting historical events associated with the cathedral were the burial within its sacred walls of the body of King Haco, who died broken-hearted at Kirkwall after his terrible defeat at the battle of Largs, and likewise the interment of the remains of the young Queen Margaret—the Maid of Norway—who died on her passage from the Scandinavian peninsula, greatly to the grief of the Scottish nation, which long lamented her untimely end. In addition to this cathedral there is, in the small island of Egilsay, the ruins of an older ecclesiastical edifice which also commemorates St. Magnus. The portion of a circular Pictish tower still standing imparts great antiquarian interest to the crumbling structure, the interior of which is supposed to have been the scene

of the murder of Magnus by his treacherous cousin.

The tourist in Orkney is sure to hear a great deal about Picts houses, and as there are three of them not very far from Kirkwall, any curiosity he may feel respecting them can soon be gratified by making known his wishes to the landlord of the hotel in which he has taken up his quarters. There is one on the west side of Wideford Hill as it slopes towards Damsay Sound. All that meets the eye at first is a green conical mound, rising slightly above the surrounding heath; but under this grassy roof there is a deserted subterranean dwelling, containing four stone chambers and an entrance and connecting passages, through which the primitive 'Peghts' were content, many centuries ago, to crawl on all-fours. The large stones converging to the top imparted great strength and solidity to this and similar *souterrains*, which were only probably resorted to by their primitive builders in the time of danger. In some of the abundant 'broughs'—which is another local name for the Picts houses—arrow-heads of flint and portions of cooking utensils have been found, as well as the bones of men and animals.

The most remarkable and interesting tumulus in Orkney, however, is the now famous Maeshowe, which is situated in the central plain of Pomona, where the Loch of Stenness lies under the shadow of low brown hills, and where the early Celtic inhabitants of the islands and the Norsemen who succeeded them have left impressive memorials of their presence in numerous grave-mounds, huge monoliths, and mysterious circles of standing stones. The Mound of Maeshowe—interpreted by the late Principal Barclay, of Glasgow

University, as meaning 'Maiden's Mound'—lies near the flat fenceless road that runs between Kirkwall and Stromness, and is conical in shape like the other brochs, which are smaller in size. From the level surface of the ground it rises thirty-five feet in height, and is about 300 feet in circumference at the base. It is encompassed by a moat or trench forty feet wide with a variable depth. The interior, consisting of a great central chamber with three side cells, is entered by a narrow passage about fifty feet in length, constructed of large slabs of stone set on edge. On reaching the interior, which can only be done by bending the back, the visitor sees by the light of his flambeau that the walls of the central chamber, which is fifteen feet square, converge overhead in overlapping layers of stone, thus forming a strong vaulted roof, and that the massive stone buttresses at the corners are composed for the most part of single blocks. Along the edges of these upright stones and around the entrance to the side cells or crypts numerous runes are inscribed, which have been variously rendered by Scandinavian professors and English archæologists. Principal Barclay, whose readings of the runes differed greatly from those of other translators, came to the conclusion, from what he believed to be the meaning of one of the inscriptions, that the mound was raised for the sons of the famous Ragnar Lodbrock in the latter part of the eighth century. The inscriptions, numbering nearly 1000 in all, appear to have been carved at intervals extending over some centuries, and there is good reason to believe—if any reliance is to be placed in translations which have been given—that some of them may be attributed to crusading Norsemen, who commemorated

in this way the periods of their departure to and return from the Holy Land. It is thus apparent that abundant food for conjecture and speculation is provided for the visitor to Maeshowe, which is one of the most profoundly interesting relics of antiquity in the British Islands.

A short walk from Maeshowe takes the tourist to the Loch of Stenness, that has the peculiarity, from communicating with the Bay of Stromness at the Bridge of Waith, of being partly fresh and partly salt water. But while this circumstance imparts great scientific interest to the loch, by enabling it to sustain various kinds of marine and fresh-water plants and animals, it derives its chief celebrity from the standing stones that rear their gray weather-worn and mysterious forms near its margin. Originally there appear to have been two complete circles, one on the Maeshowe side, and the other on the Brogar side, reached by a bridge, bearing the same name, that divides the loch into two sheets of water. Of the circle on the Maeshowe side, however, only three stones now remain—two upright, and one fallen to the ground, lying prone like an antediluvian giant. The prostrate stone is eighteen feet in length and twenty-one inches in thickness. Not far off from these there stood several years ago another huge obelisk, with a large hole through it, called the Stone of Odin, to which sacrificial victims are supposed to have been fastened, but which, in more modern times, was used by lovers for plighting their troth by clasping hands through the opening, the pledge thus given being held as binding as the most solemn oath. The sacrilegious man, said to be an alien, who demolished the Odin Stone was ever afterwards shunned and hated

by the peasantry who lived in his neighbourhood. Readers of the *Pirate* may remember the fine effect with which Sir Walter Scott introduces the Odin Stone as a trysting-place into his attractive romance, the scenes of which are laid in the Shetland and Orkney Islands.

The Brogar circle, on the other side of the bridge, is situated on a low heath-clad promontory or ness, which bears many traces of grave-mounds, having been the scene of a desperate Norse faction-fight about the middle of the tenth century. Only thirteen of the stones can now claim the designation of 'standing,' the others, ten in number, having fallen to the ground, like the larger obelisk already mentioned on the Maeshowe side. Though the blocks still erect average only about ten feet in height, the sight of them produces a singularly impressive effect, from the weird aspect they present of supernatural age. What Professor Morley has said of Stonehenge and Avebury may also be applied to the Brogar circle: 'No man knows when or how those mighty stones which defy time were lifted to their places; only the stones themselves tell us that in a day long past, of which we have no other record, the people of this island gave their chief strength to the service of religion.' The circumstance that the Norse invaders and conquerors of Orkney gave the name of *Steinsness* (Ness of the Stones) to the promontory on which the Brogar circle stood may be held as affording conclusive proof that the stones were erected by the aboriginal Celtic inhabitants who once populated the entire extent of the British Islands, from remote Unst to Salisbury Plain.

The tourist who, after exploring Maeshowe and surveying the

standing stones of Stenness, desires to gratify still more his taste for antiquities may easily do so by extending his excursion into the heathy west mainland parish of Birsay, where he will see the ruins of the princely mansion, called a palace, which was built somewhat after the model of Holyrood House by Earl Robert Stuart, father of the infamous Earl Patrick Stuart, who was beheaded for treason and conspiracy in the reign of his cousin-german, James VI. of Scotland, at the market cross in the High-street of Edinburgh. On the Brough of Birsay, which is insulated at high water, the remains may yet be seen of Christ Church, where the body of St. Magnus was laid before it was removed to Kirkwall Cathedral.

The best preserved ruin in the islands, and one well worthy of a visit, is Noltland Castle, situated near the bay and village of Pierowall in Westray, where the steamer *Orcadia* calls twice a week. The massive walls of the gray oblong pile, standing solitary in this remote spot, have a very striking and imposing appearance. The ranges of embrasures in the main portion of the pile have been compared to the portholes of some huge old battered line-of-battle ship. The castle has its spacious court, vast hall, great staircase, richly-ornamented windows, and dungeon-like cells. It is believed to have been begun, if not entirely built, by Thomas de Tulloch, who was bishop-governor of Orkney under Eric, King of Denmark, for upwards of forty years, before the islands were annexed in 1422 to the crown of Scotland. Noltland had the distinction of being twice besieged—once by Sir William Sinclair of Warsetter, and again by Earl Patrick Stuart, who succeeded in carrying it by assault. It is mentioned by David Vedder

in his *Orcadian Sketches* that one of the owners of the castle, George Balfour, had six-and-thirty children, and stood six feet seven inches in his boots. An interesting historical incident connected with this stronghold is that it afforded a refuge and shelter to the last surviving officers of the defeated army of Montrose. After it became a ruin, Noltland Castle is said to have celebrated the births and marriages of the Balfours, whose ancestors were its owners, by a kind of spectral illumination, like that which Scott describes as blazing and glimmering over Rosslyn Chapel on the night when the lovely Rosabelle perished in crossing the Firth of Forth.

LAND AND WATER SPORTS.

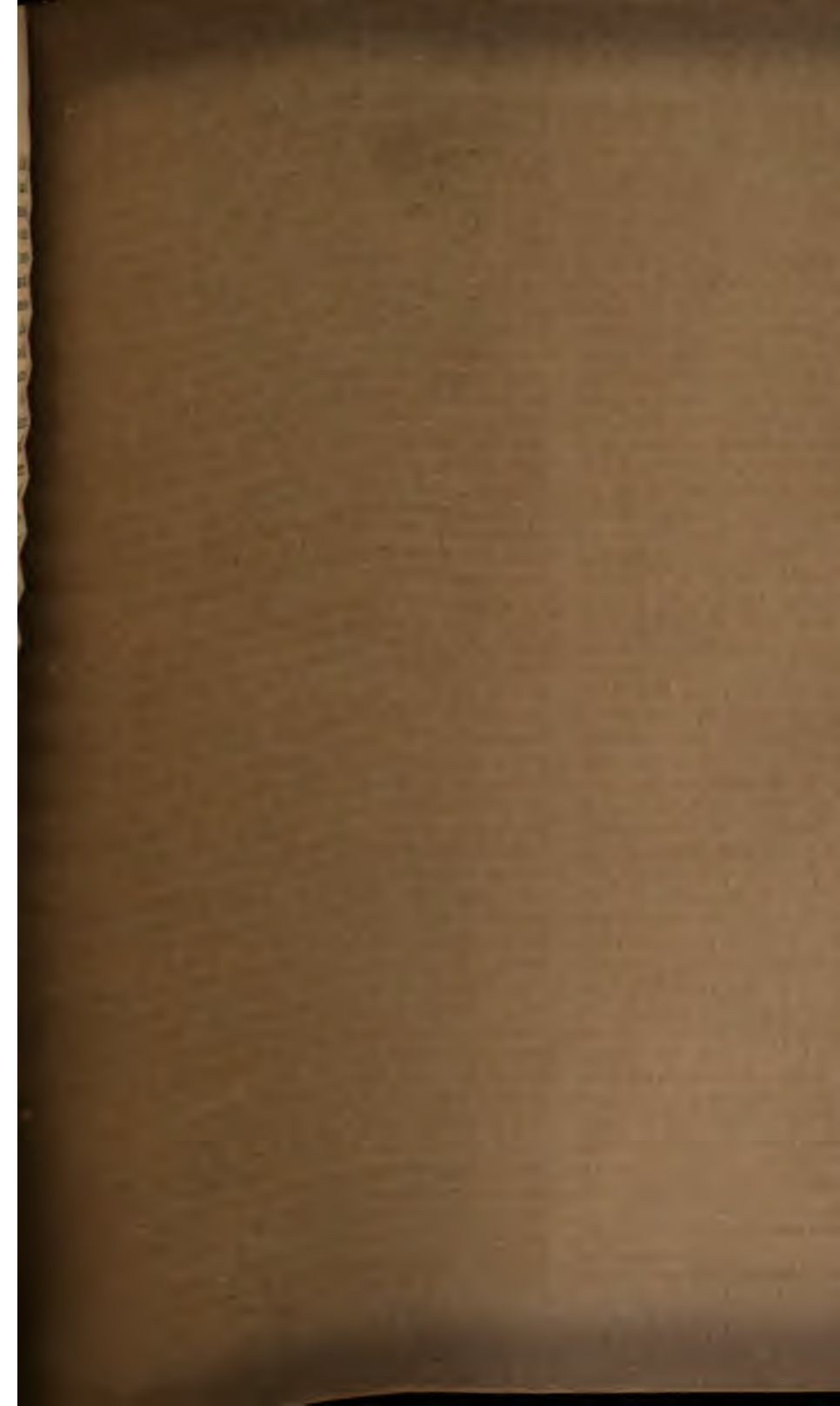
There are no Polar bears to shoot in Orkney, any more than there are snakes to scotch in Iceland; but tourists who know the use of rod or gun may have plenty of sport. The islands are the paradise of all varieties of sea-fowl and of waterfowl, whose favourite haunts are the abounding little lochs and marsh-lands. The sea-fowl include the cormorant, puffin, little auk, and several kinds of divers, guillemots, and gulls. Among the freshwater fowl there are teals, coots, shieldrakes, widgeons, mallards, garganeys, grebes, and wild ducks. Fowling can thus be actively prosecuted both on land and water, on salt water and fresh. On a fine day, with a breeze brisk enough to fill the boat's sail, nothing is more delightful than a fowling excursion over miles of the 'in-sea,' now dipping into sandy bays, now skirting rocky inlets, and anon bounding across the fresh swelling waves of forths and sounds. The commotion that the report of a gun causes among a colony of sea-

fowl, whitening the ledges of a wall of cliffs, is about as striking and lively a spectacle as can well be imagined. The pursuit of rock-pigeons often leads the fowler to parts of the island coasts abounding in romantic natural arches and caves. In their rapid movements, when darting alarmed out of the entrances of the caves they frequent, the rock-pigeons exhibit the perfection of grace. To the eye of the fowler, coasting along in his boat, there is not now presented, as in former years, the startling spectacle of the egg-gatherer sustained by a rope while following his 'dreadful trade' on the shelvy face of perpendicular cliffs.

Papa Westray—which derived what may be called its Christian name from the Culdee fathers, who had cells there—has long been noted for its immense flocks of sea-fowl; and in like manner Rousay, which is the Highlands of the northern division of the Orkades, abounds in water-fowl, game, and trout, being thus propitious to the angler no less than to the fowler. It is about the only island in the group where anything like respectable grouse-shooting can be obtained on and after the 12th of August, though I remember hearing two military officers to whom Colonel Burroughs, C.B., the proprietor, had consigned the shootings in his absence, loudly complaining one year of the barrenness of the land. In the Loch of Wasbister in Rousay there lies an islet, adorned with dwarf trees, where teal and eider duck breed in considerable quantities; and this fine sheet of water is also famous for the abundance of its excellent trout. Good rod-fishing for trout is to be had in the lochs of Graemshall and St. Mary's, in the Holm district of Pomona; in the Loch of Wasdale,

on the Binscarth estate; in the Loch of Kirbuster in Orphir; and above all, in the Loch of Stenness, which is nine miles long by one and a half broad, and which contains sea-trout as well as common trout. The angler, while peacefully and leisurely pursuing his vocation, has time to 'take stock' of the surrounding country and its still life under gray skies; of the crofters at work on their patches of cultivated ground; of the humble thatched 'huts where poor men lie;' of the huddled farmsteadings, with herds of short-horns cropping the neighbouring pastures; or of country carts rumbling and rasping along mainland tracts with loads of peat to swell the stacks that furnish fuel for winter fires.

Orkney game includes seals, which have their favourite haunts, such as the Wire Skerries and the Kilns of Brinnovan in Rousay, and it requires as much skill to bag them as to stalk a red deer on the corries of the Highlands. The seal is about as amphibious as a beaver, and the rapidity with which it 'slidders' off rocks into the water on the approach of danger is highly creditable to the promptitude and agility of this very queer fish. Whale-hunting as well as seal-shooting must also be numbered among Orcadian sports. In the autumn season great 'draves' of bottle-nosed or ca'ing whales, often three or four hundred strong, come down among the islands in pursuit of the her-ring shoals; and the visitor may consider himself highly fortunate if he is enabled to take part in the exciting chase. Hundreds of the island boats, some speeding under sail, some propelled by oars, follow in the wake of the shoal, the efforts of the boatmen being directed to drive the whales, if possible, into the shallows of sandy





LOVE AND SUMMER.

See the Verses

The first thing I saw when I stepped
 out of the plane was the sun shining
 with a golden glow. The air was
 fresh and cool, a welcome change
 from the stuffy cabin. I took a deep
 breath and felt a sense of freedom.
 The landscape below was a mix of
 green fields and small towns.
 I saw a few people walking along
 the road, and a dog was running
 happily. The scene was peaceful
 and beautiful. I felt like I had
 reached a new world. The sun
 was shining brightly, and the
 air was so good. I was
 finally home.

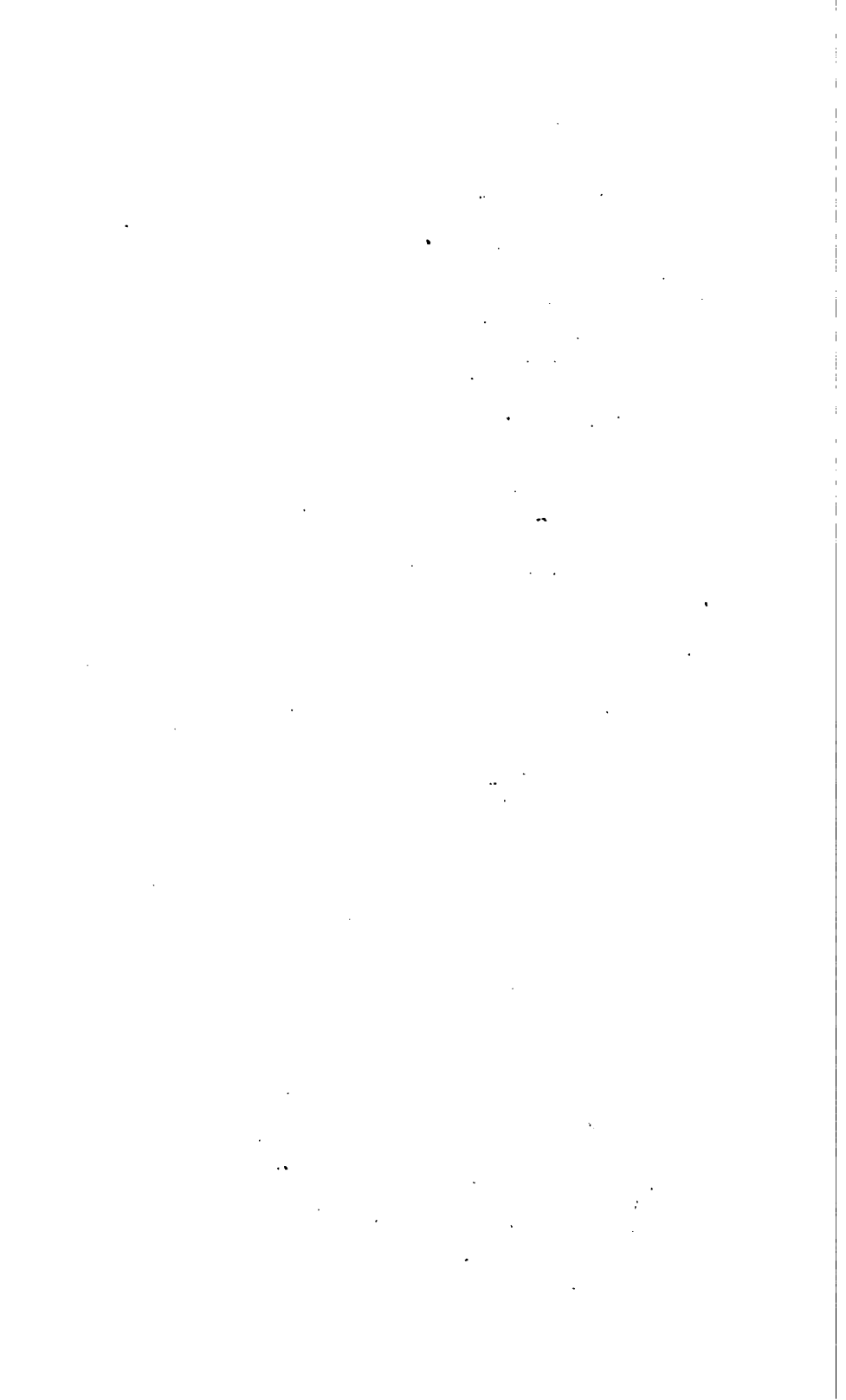
LOVE AND SEX 101

We're the only band you can't
 At a concert with a band that's
 Ever had a good time with
 A good time with a good
 I think it's a good time with
 What a good time with

And by the way, I don't know
I think of you as a friend
I think of you as a friend

1. The first step is to identify the main topic of the document.

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bays, where they fall an easy prey to the destroyers, who are armed with harpoons, ware-forks, three-pronged 'graipe,' and any other lethal weapons which come to a point. There is a regular *battue* when some hundred or two of bottle-noses are driven ashore by the pursuing fleet of small boats. The tourist will find this sport

decidedly more entertaining, as well as novel, than wandering over the abounding moors and heathy hill-sides, gun over shoulder, in search of snipe or plover, rabbit or hare.

My closing counsel to intending tourists is, Pray that your flight be not in winter.

LOVE AND SUMMER.

WHEN the south wind hums and sighs,
And ocean smiles, and wild birds sing
In woodland ways 'neath cloudless skies,
And care and gloom take hasty wing.
I think of you, and ev'ry thought
With love and joy and hope is fraught.

When ocean moans and north winds shriek,
And winter lours and birds are fled,
And woodland ways and skies are bleak,
And hope and joy and song are dead,
I think of you, and thinking sigh,
Lest love with these and summer die.

But in your eyes a brightness lives,
And in your voice a song is heard,
And each to winter something gives
Of summer sun and summer bird;
And so in thinking still of you
My sun is bright, my skies are blue.

'Tis only when that brightness fades,
And when that song has died away,
I know the gloom of winter's shades
And miss the summer's joyous lay.
Ah, lady, from me for a while
Keep winter with your song and smile!

C. H. M.

FROM LONDON TO THE LAND OF LORNE.

'WILL ye gang to the Hielands wi' me?' The invitation came from Mac. in the early part of the year; and, as it received from his sister, one Adela, an earnest indorsement, what could I do but accept it unconditionally?

The emancipating hour of my furlough in the Campaign of Care has arrived. There is a truce for me, at least, in the Battle of Babylon; and, as whirling wheels bear me through the 'endless meal of brick and mortar' to the St. Pancras Terminus, I feel a species of patronising pity for the unfortunate soldiers who are going to their daily round in the Fight of Life. La Rochefoucauld's cynical dictum is true after all. A luxurious easy-chair in the Pullman car Apollo. My Glasgow ticket is collected at St. Pancras, and I shall not be intruded upon by furies in fustian at every stopping station; while my bag will trouble me no more this side of the Clyde. The windows of the Pullman are on a level with the carpet, and the chairs revolve upon pivots; so that the angle of vision includes the whole circle of scenery to the right and the left. The newspaper remains unread, and the pile of periodicals I bought to 'kill the time' is neglected; for the Apollo reveals a flying panorama of beauty-spots, a gliding gallery of landscape pictures, a kaleidoscope of changing scenes, a series of dissolving views. The Apollo glides on with a motion that is motionless, its bogie-wheel arrangement accommodating the car to the severity of every curve and the asperity of each set of points and crossings.

Airy, spacious, and sumptuous as a drawing-room is the Pullman. Vibration and noise are so diminished as to be barely perceptible. Travelling is made a positive pleasure. The Leicestershire district, which we are now traversing, seems too tranquil for busy England. The landscape lies in a shimmer of dreamy light. Everything seems asleep in the sunshine; as it smites the railway banks, fragrant with new-mown hay; as it ripples in a tide of green and gold over ripening cornfields; as it burnishes the rush-fringed pools, where the white lilies float on their own pale shadows; as it falls upon drowsy hamlets of moss-grown, brown-thatched cottages, clustering round stumpy square-towered churches, with crumbling farm-buildings, whose mingled tints of brown and bronze, green and gray, are a painter's dream of colouring. North of the Trent bits of Alpine miniature. But soon a change comes over the spirit of the scenery. The demon of manufacture, in his money-making mania, despoils the land. A black blighting cloud hangs over graceful valleys and woodland masses upon which Nature had bestowed her most poetical touches. Pick up your newspaper now, O scribe, for the fields here are those of coal and iron. The grass grows in poor pathetic patches. The trees are stunted and sickly. Vegetation is stricken. The hills now are of hideous slag, down whose sable sides streams of molten metal have burnt their way in gaping channels. The groves are

groves of chimney-stacks. The rivers are Acherontic with coal-washings. They surely flow from the Styx to Lethe. The district is Erebus. Overhead hangs a Cimmerian vapour—a pall of smoke so subtle and substantial that local satire says it can be blasted by gunpowder, and manufactured into patent felt-roofing. The capital dinner at Normanton, and a cigar afterwards in the smoke-room of the speeding Pullman, soothes one's feelings. And now Leeds is left behind, and the green fields are presenting themselves undotted with colliery shafting and forks of flame from iron-work cupolas. The air has regained its clearness, and the sun lights up breezy hillsides, and soon flashes upon the Ribbles, which, released from the restraints of its moorland home, is swirling madly past little archipelagoes of rock and islanded trees. As the tearing train bursts through Settle, we enter upon the new line to Carlisle, and upon one of the most romantic railway rides in the United Kingdom, whether regarded from the point of its scenic charms or from a view of the gigantic natural obstacles which engineeringgenius has conquered. Come on to the balcony and breathe the 'caller' air from the surrounding moorlands—heather-scented, solitary, and full of changing lights and shadows. The Pullman is piercing the Pennine Chain. Ingleborough, Wharfedale, Shap Fells, and Wildboar sentinel the line. That mountain-king, whose back is humped like a whale's and who wears a coronet of cloud, is Pen-y-Ghent. Quick! That delicious valley is the Dale of Dent. This is the Wensleydale district. 'It is good wine if a man had only time to enjoy it,' said valorous Raleigh, tossing off a beaker on his way to the block; and the

beauty-spots that are so thickly clustered on this new line would be captivating if somebody would bribe the engine-driver to pull up to allow one to revel in their charms. Westmoreland Fells now. Mallerstang and the Wildboar, east and west, frown upon the invading express. That gray little Border-town, with the summer sun searching out its mosses and lichens, is historic Appleby. The verdurous valley of the Eden here. Pleasant pastures, with the distant lake mountains standing out clear and blue against the summer sky. We play hide-and-seek with the Eden, and the Pullman tears down the gradient as if the iron horse had taken fright, and was running madly away with the train. 'The sun shines bright on Carlisle wa'. Gretna, Dumfries, and Kilmarnock; and then there is just time for a wash before the Apollo, as the clocks are striking nine, swings into St. Enoch's, Glasgow, with its passengers almost as free from fatigue after their 423 miles' run as they were when they set out from St. Pancras at half-past ten this morning. Mac is on the platform, and seizes simultaneously my hand and my bag, and whispers, 'What'll ye tak'?

I must not dwell on Glasgow. There is nothing Scottish about it. I find myself in another London, for the second city of Great Britain bears a remarkable resemblance to the first.

'What a beautiful boat and what a shocking river!' I observe to Mac, as we stand on the upper deck of the Iona, as she churns her way down the Clyde, at seven the next morning. Adela is with us, with her frank fair face and blue inquiring eyes, that Edgar Hanley or Frank Miles might idealise and call Miranda. With just the slightest Scottish inflexion, she says, in reference to the pea-

soup the paddles of the Iona are stirring up,

'You must possess your soul in patience, and in due time you will receive your reward. Wait till you get further doon the water. The demon's cave always appears before the beautiful abode of the fairies is disclosed.'

And then this sweet Scotch girl adds something slyly satirical about the colour and consistency of a certain stream called the Thames. But the Clyde from the Broomielaw downwards is in a notoriously noisome condition. It is so much liquid sewage. The air-bubbles that are ever rising on its surface betray the fermentation of filth going on below. The problem of purification must soon be solved. The only wonder is that its solution should have been so long delayed by a city so spirited in its enterprise as Glasgow, which spent six millions sterling in widening and deepening the Clyde, and nearly two millions in bringing a water-supply to the inhabitants from Loch Katrine, forty miles away.

Breakfast is served in the coolest of atmospheres, and with surroundings which bear the elegance and refinement of the drawing-room. I am in raptures with the Iona, but Adela says there is even a fairer and fleetier craft on these waters, a sumptuous sailing-palace called the Lord of the Isles, and that Mac. *ought* to have taken us by the pet vessel to Inverary, and that we *must* return by that steamer. The present Iona is the seventh of a series of boats of that name, but the appellation this year has been departed from. The new Iona is called the Columba.

When we stroll on deck again Dumbarton Rock is rising sheer out of the water. It photographs itself instantly upon the memory,

a picture that will never need restoring. Its historic associations, and its bold impressive beauty, render the Clyde classical. Right behind the Castle crags, right away in the silvery gray of the perspective, towers the head and shoulders of Ben Lomond, preserving his characteristic contour these twenty miles away. The Clyde now grows spacious. Adela is a charming guide-book to the new scenes that are opening out. She tells me all about Wallace's tower, and Leven Vale, rendered famous by the genius of Smollett, and Cardross Castle, where Robert the Bruce passed to the Promised Land, after praying Douglas to bear his heart to Palestine. When Port Glasgow is reached, Mac. takes up the story, which relates chiefly to the timber-pools. We pause at Greenock, seat of sugar and shipping. I wonder whether the canny Scot is alive who, when Mark Lemon was appearing at Greenock with his Falstaff entertainment, said, 'Ay, man, there maun be something in this Shakespeare, or he wouldna hae lasted sae lang.' A large addition of passengers to our boat. They have come down by train from Glasgow in order to miss the Clydeside part of the voyage. Were I not too absorbed in the scenic beauties that now are being unfolded, the *voyageurs* and their characteristics would prove a diverting study. There is a decided tourist flavour about the cargo, and plenty of English Philistines, but none of the rowdy element one experiences in South-ron waters. Cosmopolitan, too, is the company. Adela has gone into a quiet corner to take a surreptitious sketch of Mr. Cockaigne, who is here, wearing a brand new 'Hieland' bonnet, feathered and silver-mounted, that requires a bronzed face, broad shoulders, and

burly form to be donned with dignity. There are several real Highlanders on board going north, but the only wearer of plaid and kilt is Mr. Birmingham, the evolutions of whose exposed tallow-coloured calves are striking, very striking. Some of Mr. Anthony Trollope's parsons are on deck, and one or two of the passengers might have stepped out of Dickens's pages. Mr. Bounderby from Manchester is talking to Major Bagstock from Leamington; and I am certain that I saw Mr. Pecksniff, with his charming daughters, in the deck saloon abaft.

The Frith of Clyde is now a broad estuary widening and winding, and lying like a lake of liquid light under the vertical sunshine, and here and there whitened with the gleam of a snowy sail. The shores lie in a haze of heat. Each little bay has its miniature watering-place, fronted by shelving sand, and baked by mountain spurs. Each particular promontory is capped with snug villas and cottages that are trellised with flowers, shaded with trees, and sung to by the sea. Mac. says there are some forty-five of these little watering-places for the summer abode of the citizens of the commercial capital. So accessible by road or rail are they, that Mr. Glasgow can leave the coast for business in the morning and return for lunch in the afternoon. Happy, happy Glasgow folk, who can in so short a space exchange the brick-and-mortar bondage of the big city for scenes so silvan! No other people can so speedily and completely escape from the fever-fret of town to such romantic repose.

We are crossing to Rothesay, the Brighton of the North, which shines like a white pearl in a rich setting of green. Away to the

south, where the sunshine lies warm on the water, are the two Cumbræes, where in the olden time lived two giants who had but one hammer to work with, and were in the habit of throwing the tool to each other as required, across the strait, between the two islands, and where in a more Christian age flourished a Scottish minister who, at the kirk every Sabbath, prayed for 'the greater and lesser Cumbræe, and the adjacent islands of Great Britain and Ireland.' Beyond these islands the serrated peaks of Arran stand out against the sunny serenity of the sky. Further west Ailsa Crag, an ocean milestone, rises like the Needle of Cleopatra just on the horizon line, where sea and sky meet and kiss each other. And nearer hand, on the Ayrshire side, are the villas of Largs, which repose at the foot of the wooded hill as if they were bathing in the tide. Now we have swept out of the broad bay at Rothesay on our westerly course, and soon enter upon the winding water-valley of the Kyles of Bute. Here is a poet's ideal of scenery, an artist's fancy of Fairyland. What is the use of my attempting to describe this silvan sea-path among the shelving hills, whose bronzed faces smile at their own wildness in the liquid mirror? Such a task would be begun in presumption, executed in impotence, and end in failure. Now we seem shut in by investing lines of hill and wooded bank, with distant mountain sentinels to cut off retreat, when, lo! the sea-path suddenly opens for us, only to find us land-locked in another sequestered reach more romantic even than the last, with bars of light and shade travelling along the scarped slopes, and with the water itself changing colour under every passing cloud. This part of the

voyage is a concentration of charms, an epitome of all that is beautiful in scenery, a Liebig's extract of romance. Here and there are Swiss-like *châlets*, mixed up among the trees, and little lonely piers, standing out in crescents of silver strand, at which nobody seems to arrive, and from which nobody seems to depart. Tighnabruaich is one of these. I remember the name because Adela writes it down for me, at the foot of a rude pencilling of the aforesaid Mr. Birmingham as a Highland clansman. Presently the Kyles expand. We double Ardamont Point, and there is a new prospect, with the Alps of Arran, seen through a gauzy veil of sunshine. Now Loch Fyne opens out its brood and stately waterway among the hills, a length of forty miles or more. Monotonous? Not a bit of it. The steamer, speeding along at eighteen miles an hour, discloses surprises in scenery at every turn. She is a busy scene-shifter. She waits for no prompter's signal. Her scenes never hitch or stick half-way. There is laughter among the Philistines. Unhappy thought! Has some dire accident happened to the Birmingham chieftain's kilt? No. It is the aquatic acrobatic performance of the porpoises which is provoking the merriment. Mac. says the presence of the porpoises is a good sign. It indicates herrings, and Loch Fyne herrings are —. Well, we go below to lunch, and discuss these delicious fish, wi' just a drappie o' the 'mountain dew,' which tastes of peet-reek and mountain springs. At Ardrishaig we are transferred, bag and baggage, to the Linnet, which is to take us through the Crinan Canal, a journey of nine miles across the isthmus, saving the circuitous and dangerous seventy miles round the Mull of

Cantyre. There is some confusion in getting on the little Linnet after the roomy Iona, but soon the tiny screw is throbbing away along the calm clear water of the canal. Be not deceived by the term 'canal.' This, my dear madam, is no dirty channel, diversified with deceased dogs, anchored head downwards with rope and brick, and with black grimy barges drawn by skeleton horses, and running between dirty banks with disagreeable surroundings. Rather a series of little burnished locks, foliage fringed and mountain flanked, and as wild and picturesque as anything between John O'Groat's and Land's End. There are seven or eight lock-gates to be opened, so the flight of the Linnet is slow. Adela and I are among the passengers who prefer to walk along the green banks during the passage of these locks. The wild seclusion of the scene acts upon the senses like a spell. Below to the right a far-stretching plain of wood and water, meadow and muir. To the left the clear canal mirrors the ferns and foxgloves, the moss and bracken of the banks, while the foliage of oak and ash and birch above casts a shadowy silhouette of leaves in the water, too. Here and there from a heathery knoll leaps a laughing stream that tumbles with a shout of joy into the Crinan. The black cock is on the hillsides, and the dabchick sails among the sedges.

The celebrated 'Oozly bird' came over, it is recorded, in two ships; but it requires three vessels to bring you from Glasgow to Oban. The voyage in the Linnet is over, and now the Chevalier waits for us at the end of the canal in Crinan Bay. Dinner on board. When we come on deck again the elastic air is blowing in from the Atlantic. The wild

crags of Islay, Jura, and Scarba gleam in the sun to our left. Mac. says we should hear the hoarse echo of Corrievreckan, the Highland maelstrom, as it roars through the savage strait between the two latter island shores. But this afternoon the sea reposes in its summer sleep. There is hardly a ripple on the water, which becomes as a plain of glass when we steer past Kerrera into Oban, clad in white, like a bride, and looking bright and beautiful, with a tinted robe of woodland green over her shoulder. When the excitement of the pier is over, when we have escaped from the Philistines at the hotel, when Mac. has obtained a little sailing-boat, and we lie out near the Sound of Kerrera in the sunset, we seem to have found the sweetest sensation of this delightful day. The dying sun in his expiring efforts dyes the western waters with blood. The light is fading from Ossian's Morvan hills. The mountains of Mull are throwing a plaid of misty gray over their shoulders. But above is a sapphire sea of cloud, with island peaks of its own, that rise out of the lake of illusive light like a chain of atmospheric Alps. Points of fire begin to burn at the bows of the boats, which are rocking themselves to rest in the silent and listening bay. The distant islands now rest on the water as if they were clouds, and have their lights too, which throb like planets newly risen. And then the cloud-islands gradually dissolve into bands of purple, and the moon comes up behind the black outline of Oban, a globe of coppery light, which loses its ruddiness and becomes a shield of soft silver.

A whole day at Staffa and Iona, the puffing Pioneer starting at eight and returning at six. Staffa and Iona do not disappoint one,

even after reading the hysterical raptures of the guide-books; for the most imaginative pen would find it impossible to make the weird wonders of these wild island caves more savagely sublime than the romantic reality.

Next morning we are on the coach for Inverary—forty-two miles away. We were up very early, but the sun was a more early riser; and when we are having a six-o'clock breakfast, he is colouring the misty Morven hills, and bringing out every outline in the magnificent mountain masses of Mull. There is a dancing ripple of blue in the bay, and a breeze that drinks like an ethereal champagne. Mac., as we are leaving Oban, points out Professor Blackie's pleasant villa, with its Gaelic inscription, *Treubhach a mach, meadrach a steach*, which he translates as 'Gallant abroad, merry at home.' Even if the route of our rattling team did not take us past the picturesque headland where the ruins of Dunolly Castle are smothered in ivy, even if we did not skirt deep woods whose trees throw Gothic archways of luminous leaves overhead, even if we did not follow the shore of Loch Etive dancing in the sunlight, travelling by coach itself is a romantic experience. It is a refreshing reminiscence. It turns back the fingers of the clock of Time; it turns back the book of your life to the light and early pages. 'Life has not many better things than this,' Johnson said to Boswell, when they were rolling along in one of the fast coaches. Alas, the Oban coach will soon be driven off this Highland turnpike; for the shriek of civilisation ere long will torture these lonely hills, and the iron horse will canter along a new railway now being made from Dalmally, under the mighty

shadow of Ben Cruachan, and through the Pass of Awe. Past one or two lonely cottages by the way, with their thatched roofs tied down with ropes secured by stones, and with the blue smoke of peat curling from their chimneys, and then we are kicking our shins against history again. For that massive ruin on the rocky point is Dunstaffnage Castle, mirrored gray stone for gray stone, lichen for lichen, in the waters of Loch Etive. There is a wealth of romance in the history of this pile, once the stronghold of Pictish princes, and whence the Scottish coronation-stone was removed by Edward I. to Westminster Abbey; but the romance of the surrounding scenery is even more bewitching in its bewildering beauty. This is the prettiest passage in the whole length of Loch Etive. Mountain and valley, water and wood and island, are picturesquely mixed. Near at hand Lismore lies like an emerald upon the water. Behind it, westward, are the majestic masses of Mull and Morven. The sunlight falls upon Kingairloch and Ardgower—burly giants that protect the North; and nearest of all Ben Cruachan, the most beloved of all the Scottish Benjamins, wears a pugaree of cloud to keep the sun from melting the snow on his neck. And now Loch Etive winds away, and we are skirting the river Awe, where the salmon are jumping up with a splash, and soon we are in the sombre Pass of Brander. Glencoe is not so gloomy as this wild gorge, dark as a thunder-cloud. The profundity of the pass seems to have a funereal effect upon the passengers. The joke has ceased to travel from seat to seat, and the driver has postponed his chaff with the guard, for the former has to keep his leaders in hand down

this declivitous defile, and the latter constantly sounds a whistle of warning to any vehicles that may be in front. The road skirts Ben Cruachan along a terrace of rock above Loch Awe. The granitic slopes of the mountain dip into the bed of the lake, and ever and anon a chasm in the gloomy hill sends down a wild torrent which finds a channel under the road into the deep dark waters of the loch. On the opposite side of the loch are precipitous mountain-sides, riven, raven-black, grim, and lifeless; not a tree. It is the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Burial cairns, lying thick together, mark the place where clansmen fell in days when the silent mountain-side started to life with hostile bands, and the pibroch and slogan shook the startled air, and storms of steel swept down the rocky ridges. One of the most historic of Scotch conflicts took place in this pass, when Macdougall won the 'Brooch of Lorne' from Robert the Bruce.

Now the trees come in sight again and the hills grow green, and Loch Awe expands and becomes as a flashing jewel in a setting of green velvet. A dream of lake scenery, with winding shores fringed with oak and ash and birch and elm, with islets of wood daguerreotypied in the water, on which they seem to float, with the glorious ruins of Kilchurn Castle growing out of the middle of the loch, and with the massive Ben forming a barrier behind, and mountain outlines tinted with gradations of rose-colour, and purple filling the perspective in front.

It is eleven o'clock when we reach Dalmally and change for Inverary, a drive of sixteen miles on the Caledonian Railway Company's gaily-painted coach, with four of the finest cattle that ever wore blinkers. Good horseflesh

is needed, for there is some stiff collar-work. The road ascends for miles between braes of heather and fern. The only inhabitants of this moorland wilderness are the black-faced sheep and those small, rough-haired, long-horned Highland cattle that painters love, and the little birds perched here and there on the solitary telegraph-wire, as if they were pecking the words out of the flashing messages. The stubborn ascent continues to Cladick, represented by one house; and when we get to the summit, behold, Loch Awe, with its islands, lies like a painting far away beneath, as expansive as the sea, with part of Ben Cruachin duplicated in the water. We salute Ben for the last time; but the grim giant doffs not his hat of cloud in response to Adela's wave of farewell. The moorland loses its wild aspect as we approach Inverary. The Duke of Argyle's woods wear a park-like repose that might belong to Richmond, were it not for the river Aray betraying its Highland

character by brawling and bounding through its darkly-wooded retreat in a succession of waterfalls. Magnificent is the dense forest through which we are driving, with giant Scotch firs, and pines that are Goliaths of the woods. And then we come suddenly upon the massive monotonous masonry of Inverary Castle, with the abrupt peak of Duniquoich, tower-capped behind, and Loch Fyne spreading in front, with the Lord of the Isles, the most beautiful craft on Scotch waters, lying off the pier, and all around a growth of foliage whose tints furnish an endless feast to the artistic eye.

We stop at the very inn upon whose window Burns scribbled the savage sarcasm:

'Whoe'er he be that sojourns here,
I pity much his case,
Unless he's come to wait upon
The lord their god his grace.
There's nothing here but Hieland pride,
Hieland cauld and hunger;
If Providence has sent me here,
'Twas surely in His anger.'

Mac. assures us that there is a better bill-of-fare to-day.

STREPHON.

ANSWER TO No. IX. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

1. B E E C H E S
2. L U N C H
3. E N N A
4. S H E P H E R D
5. T H R A L E

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abacus, Aces, Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Beatrice W., Bon Gualtier, Brief, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cat & Kittens, Cerberus, Clarice, C O M, Croydon Cat, Crucial Test, Domino, Elaine, Elisha, Excelsior Jack, Frau Clebsch, General Buncombe, Gnat, Griselda, G. U. E., Half-and-Half, Hampton Courtier, Hazlewood, H. B., Hibernicus, Incoherent, Jack, Jessica, John o' Gaunt, Kanitbeko, L. B., Lizzie, Manus O'Toole, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Murra, Non sine gloria, No. 2, Old Log, Patty Probity, Pud, Racer, Respice finem, Roe, Shaitan, Sir Hans Sloane, Tabitha, Tempus Fugit, The Borogoves, The Snark, Three Gobs, Verulam, Ximena, and Yours truly—61 correct, and 18 incorrect: 79 in all.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. X.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

[The initial, central, and final letters of the lights form three distinct but connected words.]

ALL, all are gone, the old familiar faces;
Empty are London's Squares, Roads, Streets, and Places.
'Tis August: everybody, everywhere,
Is this, for fashion or for change of air.

I.

A bird. A bard in plaintive strain
Has sung of one by hunger slain.

II.

He gave up theology
For numismatology.

III.

This, every critic will agree,
Is a new word, and used to be;
And when first met with, being new,
It proves its own example too.

IV.

Good or bad it will serve all the same for a light;
So take this for a pattern, and then you'll be right.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the September Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by August the 10th.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

The Holiday Number of *London Society*, containing the eighth Acrostic, has no doubt been long in the hands of solvers, who will have seen by the date (September 10th) for sending in answers to No. VIII. that plenty of time is allowed for its solution.

Since the notice which appeared in the May Number of *London Society* as to the answers of 'Mungo,' 'Puss,' and 'Tory' being written by one person and enclosed in one envelope, the Acrostic Editor has had some private correspondence with the writer, who, though causing the subsequent answers to be forwarded by different persons in separate envelopes, maintains that the practice he adopted is not contrary to the rules. The Acrostic Editor begs leave to differ from the writer of these three answers to Nos. I. to V., and thinks that he is only doing justice to other solvers by considering Mungo, Puss, and Tory as one solver. This he has done by compounding the names in the list on page 191, and they will be so inserted to the end of the year when the answers are correct.

LONDON SOCIETY.

SEPTEMBER 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XXII.

FAITH AND UNFAITH.

THIS was the conversation of which Joe had overheard a few words.

Halliday was in Lullington on a trifling errand of business. That was a nominal excuse, for the world of inquisitive friends, such as Elise; his express purpose was known to one only besides himself. Fan, when he called on them at Greywell that morning, had, to say the least, some glimmering of what it was. The Colonel being engaged with Mr. Kennedy, Halliday saw only Mrs. Alleyne and the girls. He was debating how on earth, his visit of civility paid, he should best compass his private object, when Mrs. Alleyne, who had never got out of an old habit of regarding her youngest daughter as a sort of 'fetch and carry,' or page in waiting, directed her, when their guest spoke of leaving, to show Mr. Halliday his best way back to Lullington, across the grounds. He and his escort got no further, however, than the kitchen-garden, an enclosure discreetly walled around. Here they could linger and seize the moment to talk freely—an impossible thing inside that house—of Norbert, the sub-

ject of their hopes and fears, fears now vastly preponderating. But he was getting better; Fan had had her summons to Stoke Michael, and was returning, she said, almost immediately.

Now Halliday had fully made up his mind that what he was going to say on this point was right; nay, that it was almost a duty for him to urge it. But how convey the intimation distinctly, and yet so delicately as not to jar on or wound her feelings?

He let her talk on,—of possibilities, of the chance of sudden unlooked-for changes, of the mending that often follows the worst crises,—all without contradiction or comment, merely giving her to infer, in the gentlest manner he could, what *he* thought, and then inquiring if that were not, in the main, the professional opinion.

'They still give me hope,' she evaded persistently.

'And will go on doing so,' he said, 'as long as possible, to break the shock, if it is to come on you at last.'

'But I share that hope,' said Fan.

'Naturally, whilst it is held out to you. But since I know what others may not,—that you are strong enough to bear the truth,—

I must tell you my fear that your renouncing it is only a matter of time. That is their belief, and I think you ought to hear it. They would gladly put off letting you know, and no wonder. Of course there could be nothing more terrible, and I can well understand how you would cling to a shadow of a chance. I pity him, from my soul—' He stopped a moment; the intensity of feeling penetrating his tone as he spoke thrilled her, coming from him; then he resumed firmly,

'But I also speak my most earnest conviction when I say that for you to sacrifice your life and your happiness to this for much longer would be a perversion of self-devotion.'

Fan remained silent, her brow contracted, her lips compressed. She could not be angry with him for saying what he thought. He had secured her attention, at all events, by his manner.

'For you *are* sacrificed,' he insisted convincingly. 'Your whole time and strength are here absorbed by the most trying service it is possible to render. Don't mistake me; no one could honour more than I the motives that incited you to take it up, and persevere whilst there was the faintest promise of success at last. But now, and taking for an instant the higher, wider point of view, it seems to me it can only be a false sentiment that says it is a desirable thing or a right thing to immolate the living to the dead; or what, if we look forwards at all, we must allow to be equivalent to that.'

Fan replied steadily. 'I try not to look beyond; but whilst there is any sense in hoping, hope I shall.'

'But that may be protracted for years—a lifetime, even,' he urged seriously. 'Have you considered that there is *no* term ap-

proaching, of necessity, to all this? They tell me that the probability now is that things remain unchanged—or with no amendment, at least—for many years; perhaps to discover at the end that the evil was past remedy from the beginning.'

'You think that now, yourself?' she asked, under her breath.

'I feared it from the first. Now that everything confirms my opinion, I don't hesitate to speak plainly. It is right and fair that you should not have the facts hid from you or glossed over; and I should have held myself bound to put them before you even at the risk of your friendship. At the same time I do not pretend to you that I am disinterested in the matter of your decision,' he added, with gentle significance.

Fan raised two grave eyes to his face, interrogatively. And he talked of the approaching change in his prospects, his proposed removal to a rather different sphere, quieter, yet with many new interests—dwelt a little on these and on one or two favourite plans, not new to her, and which in his bettered position he trusted to have more leisure and opportunity to carry out. Up to now he had been hampered in various ways. Freed finally from pecuniary pressure, he would be the abler to give the world the best that his mind was capable of. Fan's eyes were downcast. Could she trust herself to follow out his half-sketched programme— *dwell upon it?*

'And I should have liked,' he added, 'to have gone there with you for my companion.'

Something in the region of her heart gave a great bound as he spoke. Yet she was partly prepared for the admission. She had understood what he wished; understood why he wished it. He had made her feel it distantly. She had

not supposed that hearing as much from himself in his own words would have been so different a thing.

'Don't let us think about it, since it is impossible,' she replied immediately.

'Why impossible?'

'Because I've something else to do.'

'Something that has been thrust on you rather unfairly,' said Halliday, taking her up with animation. 'Just because you happen to be more competent than the rest of your relations they have no scruple in shifting their duties upon you. But nothing will persuade me that it is just or even reasonable that you, in particular, should forego your whole share of life's useful labours and interests—I won't speak of its pleasures—for one to whom, poor fellow, your utmost devotion can bring no real lasting benefit.'

A deeper gravity of expression had come into her face whilst he spoke, but the spirit of it was unchanged; no double meaning anywhere; happily free from complexity or cross-play of contending emotions.

'And who,' pursued Halliday, in a lower tone, 'if he could know—which he cannot—would, I am persuaded, so far from claiming your life at your hands, never endure such a sacrifice.'

There was a short silence; Fan was thinking. Not doubting what she meant to say, but she was strong enough to take her time. Her manner showed neither the hesitation nor hurry that would have spoken of indecision, or weakness, or passion.

'What is the good of talking of what I should do if I thought it was all useless—knew it for certain, I mean,' she said at length, abruptly, 'when I've no right to think that, so long as a chance, though the least in the world, is

held out to me by the people who know best; and they all agree that my staying makes a difference to that chance. And then, if I were to begin to despond now, to persuade myself into believing what I have never been able to believe yet, I should not be disinterested either.'

'You would consent, then, but for that?' he said.

'O, I should,' she replied gravely, but as simply as if he had asked her to come out for a walk. Both, indeed, felt that the moment was not exactly one for soft speeches and sweet outpourings of spirit. It was all much too serious and sad and real for that. Fan would have despised herself, and thought it tasteless and blundering on his part, if any touch of that sort had just then been suffered to intrude.

'You loved your brother so very much, then?' said Halliday, after a pause; 'and he you, I suppose?'

Fan looked up at him half perplexed, and replied oddly,

'That's not it. We were fond of each other, of course; and he seems to come into everything I remember, as the best part of it. He was so different from the rest of them at home; we all felt that. But he and I were never what some brothers and sisters are to each other; and all his love went to Cressida, you know. He just liked me a little—' She stopped; something checked her voice; then went on unfalteringly, 'And I was set on his doing well, I think;—and that was all, I suppose.'

If that were all, Halliday must still wonder, the more obdurately, at her choice,—her readiness, it seemed, to let go, if need be, her whole future for what he could clearly prove to her was no longer a duty, and what only the strongest affection could make acceptable.

'Granting all this, and after all

you have said, one has duties to the world as well as to one's relations,' he said energetically, 'and which, to my mind, forbid one to throw away one's life in a lost cause. I cannot think with you.'

'No, because you couldn't *feel* like me about this one,' exclaimed Fan impetuously; 'it's impossible.'

Yet the girl's mind was in a state of tremendous agitation. Of course, it was not as if Halliday were trying to tempt her away to a selfish life. Far otherwise. He wanted her to follow him to a sphere of much greater and more direct usefulness and wider sympathies. Fan's thoughts went back to the old days when she used to talk and dream so much of what she might do in the world that was worth doing—of joining in general schemes to raise the lives of poor people and ignorant people, to whom the better chances are denied.

Only, had Norbert's life been a bed of roses for him? Had he even had the average amount of sunlight allotted? Genius is a divine blessing, or else a curse, according to circumstances. Certainly its free exercise should more than compensate for the painful ultra-sensitiveness it entails. But Norbert had been thrust on the world taxed with the latter danger, the safety-valve closed, to fare with a cold home, a repelling career, Cressida's untruth—the terrible approaches of his illness. Had not his youth had to contend with worse things than always come into the lot of the poorest and lowest? How many young lives would have remained equally irreproachable? How had Hugh comported himself, under far fewer disadvantages, and whose temperament besides made life so much easier to him?

The commotion in her heart was not that of strife. She felt

the force of every word urged by Halliday, to the full as much as he could have desired. But, so far from checking or even touching the imperious necessity drawing her the other way, it served only to force out its strongest, almost passionate, expression.

'Even if I were quite sure I should never be able to do more than make the rest of his life a little less unhappy for him, I should feel the same—that I cannot desert him now. I know what a very, very slight chance there is of his getting well; and *you* say that for this, and the mere possibility of my turning the scale, I oughtn't to give up everything else besides. I tell you I must. I don't think there are many worth what he was; I should hope there are very few who have had to suffer so much, one way or another. So, not to grudge what I can do for him, *whatever* I lose by it myself, this seems to me right; and if it is a false sentiment—'

'Do me the justice to believe,' interrupted Halliday eagerly, 'that if I still can't agree with your conclusion, I admire and respect more than ever the feelings that actuate you.'

Yet he slightly resented her resolution. Not only because it crossed his will. Beneath there stirred the not ignoble jealousy of a high mind towards another who overleaps it in power of generosity. But he respected her decision, was beginning to feel he must accept it, as they walked up and down, side by side, without speaking now.

'Have you seen Mrs. Kennedy since you came?' asked Fan, by and by.

'No. I am to meet her at Monks' Orchard to-night. What makes you ask?'

'She used often to talk to me

about you. You and she were friends once.'

'So I thought,' said Halliday. 'Perhaps you fancied that we were, or might have been, more to each other. Think better of me than that.'

'You didn't know—' began Fan, rising up with a childlike impulse in her friend's defence; but Halliday stopped her, saying,

'I knew enough—more, perhaps, than you. Now she has chosen her part in the land of the living, let her enjoy it as she will, in her own way. But what has that, what *can* that, have to do with us—and ours?'

'Us—ours,' she repeated, with an involuntary wistful intonation.

It tried him a little, letting out the secret of the spirit he would have liked to appropriate.

'You've told me the tie that keeps you,' he said, still more earnestly. 'But if it was not for that—'

'If it was not for that,' said Fan, her face lighting up as she turned to him, with her heart's frank confession in her eyes—but she did not finish; he was going to speak, but she interposed, saying urgently, 'But, you see, it must end here. Things are so, and I can't change them, and I shall never change. After what I've said, I can trust you—can't I!—never to *try* and make me alter my mind.'

Halliday held his peace,

'Promise me that,' she said, with a kind of appeal.

'It is something rather hard you ask of me there,' he replied.

'Not too much.'

It was reluctantly that he submitted, pledged himself not to quarrel with her resolution any more. Yet a remote dawning feeling told him she was right; their moral union remained more inviolate than if she had yielded.

In swerving, even at his dictation, from her own directness of aim, she would have weakened the link between them.

Fan had stood firm, but after he was gone she dared not dwell on what she had relinquished. When in her sober senses, she had seen but one course as unalterably right. Remembering that, to that she will keep, however her vision may be clouded in moments like these. Their paths are to separate henceforth.

Halliday left those scenes in the least enviable frame of mind possible. He was glad that he and Cressida had met again. Nothing could have proved to him more conclusively that he had been right in his verdict. Let her make him reverse it now, if she can. Never again in this life will he look on her or think of her with tolerance. Not dead to the increased loveliness of her face, the delighting power of her being and manner—nay, he felt still as if these held for him the key to the length, depth, and height of all human passion—but the faintest rise of such response in him is ever checkmated by a counter impression that throws outer disgrace on love, if that be love.

Indifferent—he? Never! It incensed him, as a monstrous satire on the faith we cherish as life—the faith that beauty and goodness, if not one, are somehow allied; and that our nature cannot belie itself, and reason and affection be at war with each other beyond a certain point. He resented that woman's very existence, almost passionately, as an anomaly, an infinite desecration, a divine humbug.

All the night long Lefroy was haunted by the sweet mockery of a face—the face he stood engaged

to idealise in water-colour. He solicited, he urged it to haunt him, waking or dreaming. He thought through his Century of Fair Women, real and ideal, to discover with surprise and delight how in some ways she surpassed them all, and to find in her peculiar charm something novel and untried.

Even Dora Marchmont, who queened it so well over the ninety-and-nine, was, he must now sorrowfully admit, but an earthly, coarse-grained beauty by comparison; just a fine woman, with black hair, brilliant complexion, and an excellent disposition. Nothing in the world could be less subtle, strange, provocative, ensnaring—in a word, less like Cressida Landon, now Mrs. Kennedy.

With the former he had seemed fated never to get beyond the mere elements of acquaintance. When they met first at Greywell, (he had not forgotten the indefinable 'first impression' she had made), Norbert had enjoyed the undisputed monopoly of her society. Afterwards, during their visit to Monks' Orchard, that devil of a fellow De Saumarez had had it all his own way. There never was a chance for another man to get in a word where Alec chose to put himself forward. Lefroy bethought him with a sigh that now, perhaps, he might get to know her a little at last.

As to Joe, he accepted him cheerfully, as a matter of course (and even thankfully, for having put an end to a sort of competition in which he, Lefroy, felt himself nowhere), but as a matter of course looked upon him as standing, in his capacity of husband, quite apart from anything poetic or ideal or remarkable. Nay, that the relations of husbands and wives should be in-

tensely humdrum and uninteresting seemed to Lefroy a flat necessity, and he would have been ready to prove it to you elaborately and undeniably at any moment. Long and constant intercourse with your ideal, scattering the mystery, must mean ruin to the charm—leave no more reverence in you than the priest entertains for the image; whereas if you live apart from your elective affinity, you may go on being seriously enamoured of her, and sighing after her perfectly sincerely for several years.

Like those philosophers who gravely contend that it is possible to derive great spiritual comfort and benefit from a religion without believing it to be true, so to Lefroy there seemed nothing grossly absurd or monstrous in quasi-spurious devotion of this sort. Just as they only ask for a sham heaven, so he could take up with a sham earth. For in his heart of hearts he was somewhat sceptical about Love and its miracles, but he liked to make much of that divinity in his talk. He had gone about the world masquing in lover's disguise, but untroubled by any keen ambition to win the object of his affections.

He found himself looking forward to his visit to the farm with impatience. The clock was on the stroke of one, when, punctual to his appointment, he sauntered up the road in that direction and crossed the strip of garden under the walls, humming an air. Glancing up suddenly at the windows of the top story he saw Cressida looking out, the prettiest picture imaginable, as she stood at the lattice leaning back, her dark glossy head against the white blind. She bent forwards, and wished him good-morrow, laughing.

'You look like an operatic tenor out there, hovering under

the windows. I was expecting to hear you break out into a serenade in the proper troubadour fashion. Why do you not begin?

Catching the idea, Lefroy began at once with snatches of appropriate recitative and cantabile, accompanied by mock action, extemporising a little burlesque scene for her entertainment. He was in the middle of it when the face disappeared all of a sudden, and Lefroy found himself declaiming pathetically to the window-blind.

He cut short his lay, and tripped up to the porch, where the door stood open, and Cressida came gliding down-stairs to meet him.

'Come in, come in,' she said. 'You are now going to be initiated into some of the mysteries of agricultural home-life.'

He was taken the round of the kitchen, much laughed at for his portentous ignorance in domestic matters. He deplored it, he said; his greatest ambition in life had always been to know how to cook.

Lunch followed, and Lefroy looked on at Joe's repast and marvelled, as Jack when he assisted at the giant's meal. He reminded Cressida of her request, which was merely that he would look over some sketches she had made when abroad, and give her the benefit of his criticisms.

After lunch Joe went off out of doors, and Lefroy's afternoon slipped by pleasantly in going over Mrs. Kennedy's drawings carefully and critically. He soon perceived she did not relish being found fault with, and wishing to please, took his cue to be judiciously sparing of censure. She had a nice feeling for colour, seized some of the secrets of Nature better than himself. He proposed that they should make some sketches together during his visit; she might learn in that way, he said,

what he could teach her, which he modestly seemed to intimate was not much.

The portrait was not forgotten, but there was no time left for it that day. It was arranged that he should come and begin to work upon it the next morning; and he left delighted with her, delighted with himself, and rather oblivious of everything else.

'I mean Mr. Lefroy to give me lessons,' observed Cressida to Joe at dinner.

'Do you?'

'I do indeed.'

'What are his terms?' asked the brutal Joe, jumping at once to the point.

'O, what mercantile animals men are!' laughed Cressida. 'I must confess I never thought of him myself as the professional at so much an hour. His terms? Well, I'll try and find out; but I think if I allow him to paint my portrait he ought to consider himself amply remunerated.'

'Very likely,' said Joe slyly.

'You may think so; still I should prefer his taking the cash, and so, I'll undertake to say, would he.'

Again Cressida laughed gaily.

'Indeed I don't think he's that sort—'

'What sort may he be, then?' said Joe; 'for I can't make him out at all.'

'Can't you?' said Cressida.

'Now I should have thought it so easy that it was impossible to make a mistake. He's all shop-window, don't you see; a mere shell of a human being, but a very nice little shell, and I won't have a word said against him.'

'Was it true, I wonder, about there having been something on between him and one of the Alleyne girls—Jeanie, I think?'

'O, I fancy not,' said Cressida carelessly, disposed to discredit the floating rumour. 'He, who is

professed to worship beauty, marry a plain girl like that! I can't fancy him marrying at all!

She had quite recovered her spirits to-day; and when once Joe had said something about her taking advice, she ridiculed the idea.

Not that she could get rid all at once of the impression of last night, the sense that those who knew best condemned everything about her. The retorts she had all but forced from Halliday's lips, but which had startled her when outspoken, still rang in her ears. Now Cressida was fond of running herself down, calling herself hard names, in all sincerity too; yet she could not bear to find others agreeing with her that she was vain and sordid and self-seeking and low in her aims. She might deserve to be despised, but wanted to be worshipped *quand même*, and thus had come, alas, to be less and less particular about the means, so long as that manna did not run short.

Last night something of the old power over her of Halliday's opinion had asserted itself.

After all he was right; and that was the worst of it. The truth about herself was ugly; so ugly, that if she faces it she will be driven by every impulse of shame to deal with it fairly, think a little of what will make her really and truly worthy of her own and other people's regard, and thus put Joe's affection—the rock on which her life now rests—out of danger from having its foundations undermined. It is always open to her, on the other hand, to allay vexation and blind self-contempt by laying to her soul any false and flattering unction she can get. Halliday has gone. He does not care what becomes of her now, she thinks bitterly. The disagreeable contemplations he has

raised may be set aside. Who else will remind her of her imperfections? Not Joe, who has never believed in them. Nor Lewis Lefroy, who frankly confesses what a privilege he thinks it to sit at her feet, and have her order him about. His compliments might be stale and exaggerated, his enthusiasm skin-deep, his nature flighty and brittle; his adulation was a little drug, harmless in itself, and particularly acceptable at this particular moment. Why should she not indulge in it as much as she likes?

The next day he came to begin the portrait. But he soon despaired of setting about it in the ordinary way. She was a provoking, not to say a hopeless subject. He must study her face, he said; get it well into his mind, and then try and dash off the sketch as quickly as possible in some favourable moment, and before the impression could elude him. It was his only chance of doing her or himself scant justice.

Meantime the sketching lessons proceeded regularly. He was at the farm as much as he chose. Barberine, as he had predicted, would not lock him up or give him flax to spin; but sketch with him, sing duets with him, discourse with him, and let him discourse, to his head's content—it was a pleasant variation on the monotonous jog-trot of life at the farm. Joe thought the artist, with his ceaseless chatter and his mannerisms, rather a bore, and said so to Cressida, who in her secret soul more than half agreed with him in his judgment. They were in the habit of discussing him pretty freely together, which made her feel hypocritical when afterwards she found herself so smilingly receiving the incense he was so ready to lavish on his tutelary saint. But all this outward

empressment to serve her, this deference to her tastes, this fuss about her portrait, was exactly what she had always liked and coveted. It suited her ambition to have artists ready to idealise her; it had formed part of her Monks' Orchard programme. For the rest, the most prudish judge could have found nothing to carp at here. There are stock situations, in which, should the stock danger for once happen to be conspicuous by its absence, the actors rush on to the conclusion there can be no other conscientious considerations of any sort with a claim on their attention.

He was always excessively confidential to his friends, and one of his first steps was to impart to Cressida all the details of his past history—professional, social, sentimental in particular. One day something transpired about Jeanie—he hinted gently at his floating ideas in that direction, appealed to Mrs. Kennedy, as it were, for advice. From this they came to the subject of love and marriage in general. Lefroy would broach startling theories, and defend them ingeniously in spite of Cressida's opposition. She was amazed at first, afterwards amused, by the sophistry. And so they would go on day after day. Nothing in heaven and earth but Lefroy could hold forth about it. But there was unreality in all this; and the main interest for him lay in the impression he was making, and for her in the influence she was acquiring. She had always aspired to influencing people. There was no objection to that. Then comes the question how to use, or abuse it.

Men are strange creatures. It was a remark Cressida had already had occasion to make more than once in the course of her existence; but Lefroy's unblushing

artificiality was something new—he seemed merely to be blowing pretty soap bubbles for distraction's sake. It piqued her; sometimes to that extent that she said to herself, laughing, it would serve him right to make him fall in love with her in good earnest.

Jeanie, meanwhile, during these same three weeks, was passing through the three stages of expectancy; pleasant, to begin with, when she heard Lefroy was at Monks' Orchard—that meant he was coming to Greywell, and every sun rose upon the chance of his turning up there before it set; then fretting, as nothing further was seen or heard of him; lastly, bitter.

Mrs. Alleyne went to call at Monks' Orchard one day. Jeanie accompanied her. They saw Elise, who mentioned her guest. He was still with her—O yes, but not in. He was at the farm—goes there every day to give Mrs. Kennedy her sketching lesson; and then they laughed, which exasperated the girl.

Then she tried to make out that she was silly to be vexed. He might be busy painting. Why should he not give Mrs. Kennedy lessons? She bethought her that Greywell was not very inviting or hospitable, that the chill seemed to be felt afar off, and scare away visitors. Some opportunity would bring him, sooner or later.

Nay, Lefroy himself would obstinately have repudiated the idea that his feeling for Jeanie was undergoing any modification. He was merely making a little sentimental circular tour, that would no doubt bring him back to the same point as he had started from, but kept things in abeyance meanwhile, took up his time, and so forth. Yet the fact remained that here he had been for three weeks,

and never once been over to see his friends at Greywell.

How could he help it? It was so divine, going out sketching with Mrs. Kennedy!

'Take care,' said Elise to him shrewdly one day, as she was rallying him gently on spending most of his time away from her. 'I used to think you carried a charmed heart, Lewis; but I begin to fear the divinity at the farm has bewitched you. One of these days I shall expect to see you appear decked out in green, with a broad hat and ribbons, like the virtuous peasant in a play.'

Lefroy laughed, evidently flattered.

'I am getting jealous of your being monopolised by Mrs. Kennedy,' she continued. 'Isn't Joe beginning to be the same?'

'O dear, no,' said Lefroy, in his ingenuous way; 'he's even quite glad, I think, that there should be some one to amuse her when he's engaged on his farm, as he generally seems to be.'

'Suppose you stay with me to-day. I am going over to call at Greywell,' she said maliciously.

'O, but this morning I positively must be at the farm,' he said seriously. 'I'm to begin the portrait—at last.'

Elise shook her head, shrugged her shoulders, and laughed. But she always let people go their own way. She had noticed that good advice from her never seemed to strike home.

The fact was, he had put off going to Greywell so long that he was perversely disinclined, perhaps rather ashamed, to show himself now; and then, and then, it would be well to feel sure beforehand what sort of a face he was going to put on. Just at present he was in too great a whirl, and entirely occupied with his portrait

in the second place, and the subject of it in the first.

He had been play-acting all his life; he was play-acting now. But not for that indifferent. Something like the stager, who from counterfeiting the signs of various feelings can excite a sort of spurious afterglow in himself, and command real tears, real agitation, animation, joy, and chagrin at will.

Now with Jeanie Alleyne he had, as it were, thrown himself into a little domestic drama of the most quiet school, to which the most stirring incidents belonging are a lover's quarrel, a transient misunderstanding or parental frowns; just to prolong courtship, for all is bound to end in union at last. It might be flat, it might be tame; it was certainly the only sort of love-tale in which Lewis Lefroy, with his limited mental calibre, was fitted to end by playing a genuine rôle. It was unlucky that vanity led him to neglect it for attempts at effects of a more ambitious nature, tempting him with a new part, such as to 'poser' as one of his favourite heroes in modern Parisian comedy, for instance—the fascinating, appreciative friend and devotee of the *femme incomprise*.

'Mated with a clown—mated with a clown!' that was his recurring comment every time he returned from visiting the Kennedys. Coming from Lewis Lefroy, however, it did not signify much more than that Joe's boots were not of the approved build.

Joe was not a clown. His book-learning had passed out of his head certainly; still in filtering through it had done some work, leaving a mind improved, strengthened, controlled, and regulated up to a certain point.

Joe, as Lefroy had observed, was not jealous. Joe would as





'Am I such a tiresome model, then?' asked Cressida.

soon have thought of being jealous of Lefroy as of the canary-bird. And Joe was right. All these walks and talks and rather studied interchange of ideas were a matter of no account to him, of very little to Cressida, though of something to Lefroy himself, and of more to another.

'I had almost despaired, you know,' he said to her that day, as the sitting concluded, 'of ever feeling it was worth while to begin.'

For the last three weeks the canvas had been prepared, the background sketched in; to-day first he had set to work on it, and for half an hour had been painting rapidly.

'Am I such a tiresome model, then?' asked Cressida archly. 'You look so grave. Haven't I been still enough?'

'I don't know why I look grave,' said he, with a sigh; 'for I think—I believe—it is going to be a success.'

'How modest you are!' she laughed, and came round to look at his work. 'Why, it will be a success, of course.'

'Not at all,' said Lefroy naïvely. 'It doesn't follow. Hitherto all my large portraits have been failures. Ask the Royal Academy, that has refused them regularly year after year.'

'Well,' said Cressida, walking away, and going to the piano; 'but I warn you I shall be as particular as the Hanging Committee.'

'Will you?' he said despondingly. 'However, I suppose every one has a chance sometimes—may succeed once in a life; it depends more on one's life, do you not think, and the people who come into it, than on mere talent?'

Cressida laughed playfully, and instead of answering turned off

into one of their Italian duets; he chimed in when his turn came, and they sang it through to the end.

'Do you know,' observed Lefroy gravely, when they had finished, 'that some people I've had to practise duets with are quite angry and offended with me for singing "*t' amo, t' adoro*," with proper feeling.' Cressida laughed aloud. 'It puts me out to sing with them,' he continued plaintively. 'I'm so glad that you are not.'

'O, why should I be?' said Cressida. 'I haven't the slightest objection to being adored, I must tell you—never had, not in the very least.'

She had left the instrument, gone to the sofa, and taken up her work. Lefroy stood leaning against the piano in a graceful attitude, turning over the leaves of a piece of music.

'I wonder now,' he said meditatively, 'which is more delightful, to adore or to be adored?'

'It must depend, I suppose,' she said, smiling mischievously; 'for my part, I am afraid I like receiving better than giving away, you know.'

He sighed. Joe came in at this moment, which ended their dialogue. Lefroy stayed to dinner. It was in the course of the evening that Joe, with a dim idea of 'fishing,' asked Lefroy if he had seen anything of the Greywell people since he came down. Why must Cressida look up, as he said 'No,' rather in the tone of one making a discovery?

When, a little while ago, he had taken her into his confidence and asked her advice had she not given it for the step? Perhaps the question had not been very sincerely asked, or the advice not very sincerely given, or ill followed up. She knew well that

he would have let most absent things go at that moment for the sake of playing butterfly around her a while longer. When she is quite tired of it he will find out, and desist. As yet she has shown no sign.

CHAPTER XXIII.

JEANIE'S ROMANCE, CONCLUDED.

'WHAT should forbid us to dip into any passing interest or enjoyment that may come within our reach? who can demand from us such a superhuman strength of mind as that?'

The philosophy of Lewis Lefroy. In point of fact no one had ever demanded from him anything of the sort, least of all he of himself. He had spent his life in picking up the golden apples in the race, made that his business, to which other objects had always given way.

Thus in everybody he met he had come to behold a possible mine of instruction, amusement, and culture to be worked; out of which, when you had got whatever there might be, more or less, that was new to you, you passed by, or might do so, and went on your way rejoicing. It was a system that suited him very well, and which, if all the world were cut on the same pattern, might perhaps be generally recommended: but unfortunately it is in the nature of things that such studies can sometimes only be carried on at an infinitely great expense to others, and small gain to oneself.

In his unfortunate craving for petty sentimental research he never missed an opportunity for this kind of artificial observation. A short and agreeable way of adding to his knowledge of the science of human life. He was persuaded

that his could only be perfected by dipping into the greatest possible variety of experiences; thus, like a smatterer in book-learning, dooming himself to everlasting, unconscious, and therefore dangerous, ignorance.

For him a single phase, kept to, followed out faithfully and carefully, would have taught more than he, with his limited mental force and scope, could ever hope to acquire from indiscriminate prying, which served to blunt rather than strengthen what perceptions he had.

He preferred to try a little of everything, fatal in his case to his hope of ever fathoming anything, till the chances of the survival of any particular inclination long enough for it to strike root or determine him to any special course were precarious indeed.

Another golden apple had fallen in his way. He had turned aside to pick it up. The effect on his state of mind had been beyond what he had reckoned at the outset, or until its work had been wrought—not deep, it may be; but then there was no great depth to be reached.

His acquaintance with Jeanie seemed to be receding into the far, far distance, and now to appear to him at last in its true proportions and perspective. It was an episode. Was not his whole life but a series of episodes, entirely unconnected, each of which had engrossed him for the day being, and then fall off, complete, separated from his to-morrow, as a drop of water gathers and falls?

That little history should be labelled, dismissed, put aside in its own particular pigeon-hole, never to be forgotten, of course. But there seemed no absolute reason why it should terminate in a different way from its predecessors, by committing him to a

quiet, obscure marriage. The idea, with the faint charm it had once had for him, had faded, and he could not have called it to life again now by any means that he knew. It is the penalty of following after factitious emotion, that natural emotion runs the risk of being frittered away. The treacherous amusement he fancied and freely indulged in left him with increased distaste for simple, healthy sources of happiness, vitiating his appreciation for the same.

As for Jeanie herself, the idea that she could have anything to complain of was, when analysed, found to be wholly untenable. He could hardly be said to have made love to her; they had merely been friendly and pleasantly communicative. Cressida must have at least a dozen such harmless flirtations in her *répertoire* of girl-ish memories. Jeanie had led a very retired life, and this might very likely be her first experience of the sort. He did not see why it should not, for her, as well as for him, turn into a pleasant reminiscence for after years, something to be grateful for rather than otherwise. Nay, her intercourse with him must have been entirely to her advantage, giving her fresh insight into human character, suggesting fresh thoughts, opening her mind. In short, she was indebted to him for one of those fragmentary love affairs, which Lewis Lefroy believed to be good for every one; a little painful perhaps, sweetly sad, bitterly sweet; but the more of such incidents you could crowd into your heart's history, the better. It must be rather disadvantageous, he thought, for man or woman, limiting to ideas, fatal to general mental culture, to marry a first love. Thus he legislated for Jeanie precisely as he would for

himself, nor recognised that to enable us to go in for breaking our own heart and other people's for practice and improvement's sake, and yet find the game worth the candle, we must have, not only the proper dispositions, but outward circumstances to suit.

His assiduous attendance at the farm had not escaped comment in the neighbourhood, and gossip penetrated even to Greywell sometimes, especially when it was sour. Jeanie's first feeling had been a downright bitter pang of jealousy. He was giving Mrs. Kennedy lessons, and busy; had no time to come to Greywell even for an hour, though time unlimited to spend at the farm. What became then of the particular pleasure he had expressed at the prospect of this visit because it would bring them together again?

O, she knew very well how he had been minded once. Lefroy was a remarkably transparent person; he might feign a feeling, but never conceal one, however he might flatter himself. Jeanie was face to face with a problem too perplexing for her to make anything of it, for good or ill.

She lectured herself, said that all this was very foolish. He would come back to her. How should Mrs. Kennedy possibly interfere with their relation to each other? Yet now every day that passed made her feel as if the slight bond between them were giving way, the gap widening in some mysterious intangible manner. But this must end, and soon.

A day was coming when the Colonel was to be out, and Jeanie took what, for her, was a momentous resolution. She wrote to Lefroy, ostensibly for the purpose of returning a book he had lent her long ago, and which he had faithfully promised, yes and intended (also long ago), to come and

fetch away himself. She mentioned casually the day on which her father would be from home, and seemed to suggest his coming that morning to see them. It all sounded natural, careless, indifferent enough. It was only when she found herself awaiting his reply that she realised how much, for her, depended on what it might reveal. Lefroy wrote off at once. He was so sorry, it was particularly unlucky, he was engaged that day. His note was hurried, flurried, apologetic—it was in fact the clearest possible reflection of his transition state of mind.

What could it mean? What engagement could he have that forced him to keep away? He said nothing about calling at any other time. He was leaving Monks' Orchard soon, she believed. Did he mean to depart without seeing her? If so, she would know what to think.

Now Jeanie could not go on courting a delusion as such. Her life was not bright enough for that. Those who are scanted in the necessities for happiness have no relish for its dainties. Lefroy's letter roused in her a restless impatience. She said to herself proudly that if it *was* Mrs. Kennedy and not herself that he cared about, she would know. In her heart she did not believe it. Why, that evening at Monks' Orchard two years ago, when she, Jeanie, had been his partner for many dances, some sly disrespectful remarks had escaped him about Cressida and the wild-goose chase she was leading Alec de Saumarez, —remarks which Jeanie remembered well, and had thought almost too malicious. The present mystery was dark, indeed, and her perplexity led her to a rather fatal resolution. She wanted to satisfy herself.

For some time past Mrs. Alleyne

had been urging her daughters to take an early opportunity of calling at the farm. The latest accounts from Fan had been so much more encouraging—indeed, for the last month the news had been steadily good—that the kind-hearted woman was anxious for Cressida to be apprised without delay of what it must needs please her to hear.

But it was Jeanie who proposed to her sister that they should choose this particular afternoon for their visit to the farm. They would go rather late, so as to be sure to find Mrs. Kennedy in.

Of course Jeanie's letter had reached Lefroy at a particularly unfortunate moment. It was perfectly true that he had promised to go to the Kennedys' that day; to bring the portrait which was finished, and which he had taken away to Monks' Orchard and kept there for a while, and to give Mrs. Kennedy a last sketching lesson. Moreover, he was considerably more occupied with the transcendental trifles that had formed the staple of his thoughts and intentions the last six weeks than with his past or his future.

He and Cressida sat out sketching under the trees as long as the light was favourable, then went indoors, where the portrait was unpacked, inspected, criticised, and the right place for it discussed and chosen.

It was a success. Elise pronounced it the best thing he had ever done. Cressida, whilst admiring it as a work of art, smiled with petty exultation, as on a trophy. She noticed Lefroy regarding it with so sad and wistful a leave-taking gaze, that she must needs banter him a little on his manifest reluctance to say good-bye to his masterpiece.

He admitted the charge; then turning to her (she was making the tea; it was an æsthetic treat, he had often told her, to watch her making the tea) observed deferentially that he had a confession to make.

Cressida begged to know more. It was merely that, as he now owned, he had taken the portrait away in order to make a copy for himself. Would she forgive him? Mrs. Kennedy laughed.

'It is rather late,' she observed, 'to repent now. Why did you not ask my leave before?'

'Because I was so afraid you would refuse it,' he said naively; 'may I keep my work now?'

'I say yes, but only to ease your conscience,' she replied, rallying; 'because, as you painted it without my consent, I imagine that whatever I say you will dispose of it in your way, and not mine.'

Lefroy laughed. 'Do you know, I have always sympathised with those people we call superstitious, and who must have images of the divinities they revere standing before them. It is next to impossible to idolise an abstraction; a fetish of some sort is a necessary of life for all forms of adoration, human and divine,' he concluded, stirring his tea.

'Shall I tell you when you ought to have lived?' said Cressida suddenly; 'in the Middle Ages, and in France. You would have made such a first-rate lawyer at the Courts of Love, you know.'

'I really think I should,' said Lefroy; 'indeed you have no idea how often I find myself arguing the same sort of questions and debating in the same vein. Why, this very morning I was over one, and went all through the case in my head.'

'What was the question?' she asked.

'One that agitated them greatly—as it has all philosophers in all ages—whether the affection of husbands and wives or of lovers be the most profound and precious.'

'And pray what was your verdict?' asked Cressida disdainfully.

'Well, the judgment of the court in this instance was, I believe, that the attachments, being of a totally different nature, couldn't be compared for a minute.'

'I should have liked to hear the arguments,' said Cressida, laughing.

'I must confess never to have read them through,' said Lefroy; 'they were generally dull and long-winded, so I found it much more interesting to invent a set of my own.'

'And on which side were you engaged?'

'O, I made a special pleading in behalf of the superiority of married life. Not being married myself I thought of course I must be the right counsel to stand up in its defence.'

'Indeed,' said Cressida incredulously.

'For example,' he continued, 'after a good deal had been said on both sides, I proved it was an insult to Love in the abstract to suppose that anything, even matrimony, could alter or destroy it; that where you had been fortunate enough to win the one person in the world you would have chosen, neither time nor circumstance could impair the sentiment in the slightest degree.'

'Very fine indeed,' said Cressida coolly; 'and pray what did the other side reply?'

'They replied that that was true enough, but unfortunately applied to only one case in a thousand; since people married where they could, but everybody loved where they would. An ideal union might chance once in a century,

but their judgments in these cases must be based on the rule, and not the exception, you see.'

'Well?'

'Of course there could be no answer to that. Then as to the proof which was the most precious, they said it could only be made in one way. Suppose a man to be allowed to decide his life beforehand, and given his choice between the two, ordinary domestic happiness realised, or an ideal love, though a hopeless one. Would any true lover hesitate to prefer the latter?'

'Well,' said Cressida, puzzled, 'and what did you answer to that?'

'Nothing,' he said pensively; 'I had to confess myself beaten, and that my cause was lost.'

Cressida was still laughing at this sudden turning of the tables, and going to retort, when the interesting discussion was cut short by an unexpected interruption—the Miss Alleynes were announced.

Mrs. Kennedy received them with her usual grace. She had tea and conversation duly ready for her visitors, and furnished them with an ample supply of both. Only Lefroy joined in the flow rather fitfully, like one out of humour. His brow had clouded and he was feeling annoyed, pettish, set against Jeanie, and defiant. He preferred Mrs. Kennedy's society to anybody else's. Well, he was prepared to take the consequences. If other people chose to quarrel with him on that account he really could not help it. His manner was curious, constrained, uneasy,—the manner of one who feels himself remotely in the wrong, but is thus driven all the more to maintain his present position, and to stick to it that he is in the right.

Cressida, who was perfectly at

ease, supplied all deficiencies of spirit in the rest; Millie, full of her news, hastened to impart it, and Jeanie, anxious to appear as if nothing was amiss, talked hard and fast. Yet all were glad, they hardly knew why, when it ended, and the Miss Alleynes, their call duly paid, their good tidings duly communicated, rose to depart. Cressida as they did so remarked to Lefroy that Elise was expecting him home early that day, but for once he perversely declined to take her hint.

Cressida was vexed with him—had been feeling so for the last half hour, and meant to tell him so after those girls were gone. Something in his manner to Jeanie had given her a glimpse of what she had really not understood before. Perhaps it had been a selfish game on her part, this readiness to appropriate what had no intrinsic value for herself.

Jeanie, when she got home, went straight into a room where there was a full-length mirror, in which she could scan her reflection from head to foot.

The figure she met there seemed to stamp a sense of hopelessness into her indelibly. She saw herself as it were branded insignificant—dull complexion, thin hair, unmeaning countenance, marred at present by its deadened expression—the light gone out that had brought a little fairness into it once.

It is true she had just come from a radiant vision of Mrs. Kennedy—seemed even now to see rising behind her that laughing face with the shining eyes, and that glance of conquering assurance that is half the victory won. To set herself against that force Jeanie thinks is like throwing herself before some powerful engine to stop its course. She turned away with a dull

bitter feeling. The world is for Cressidas, not for Jeanies.

Yet to Mrs. Kennedy Lefroy is, can be, nothing whatever. What can she be to him? How has she contrived to dwarf you in his estimation? The whys and wherefores are all a maze, but there is dead certainty as to the fact itself.

'If I was even clever,' she thought, 'and knew about things and people! But he must have found me stupid, and got tired of it and of me.'

It was all a senseless mockery, then, that time when their minds seemed to have met, and she thought, and fancied he thought, they might unite their lives.

No such mere dream as it seems to her now. Half a hundred diverse ways of life and love would have had almost an equal chance with Lefroy's adaptability. A time had been when he would have drifted contentedly into this channel, and found he had done well. Instead, he has drifted away. Will he lift a finger to steer back? And if he does, he may find the fancy obstacles he once wished for become real now.

That evening at dinner Millie, giving account of their afternoon visit to the farm, did not fail to observe that they had found Mr. Lefroy there, of course. Garrulous tongues had been spitting fire on the subject, ere this, in the Colonel's presence, and Jeanie was scarcely surprised at the instant comment evoked.

'I wonder Mr. Kennedy can allow such a dangling snob in his house.'

Yet her heart sank afresh at the ominous words. Should Lefroy present himself now, he will meet with a rebuff at head-quarters—insults, perhaps—such as might try the patience of any one.

Of course, if he were true of

heart, faith and pluck might right all yet. A determined lover must get the better in the end. But Lefroy a determined lover! Jeanie, at least, has never had any illusions on that score. His feeling for her was a gossamer-web. Cressida had touched it with her hand, half in sport, to try how strong it was, brushed it away before she knew—threads which, had they been let alone, might perhaps have strengthened, turned at last to stronger cords that would have inextricably connected those two for the life-happiness of both.

Cressida had helped to destroy it; it was certainly not hers to reconstruct. Perhaps, could Jeanie have looked into her mind that evening, she would have been startled to see there so little to envy in any sense, after all.

Left alone with Lefroy, Cressida began gently to take him to task, to touch delicately on the subject they had before this talked over together. She was in earnest now. Too late. His retorts were cynical and wayward. He laughed. O, as for that, he had really and truly no serious fixed intention of marrying. Did she think so? He intimated he could hardly believe it. Cressida, depressed by the result of her expostulations, took refuge in silence, whilst he talked on.

He left at last, downcast, moody, more obstinately confirmed than ever in his Cressida-worship, and perhaps more than ever incredulous in the depths of his heart as to love and worth having any connection here below.

Cressida stood long at the window musing. How had she turned to account the influence she had coveted—coveted for its own sake? Would he go away, when he went, the better for having known her, with more or with

less faith in goodness and sincerity and unselfish friendship? Looking back on the last six weeks, she could not fix on a single thing she had said or done in connection with him at which, viewed by itself, one need take exception. It was the spirit of the whole that had somehow been wrong, false, misleading. It was easy to say that she had merely been passive, and let him make a fool of himself in his own inimitable way, as conscious as anybody of the little dignified part he played. The fact remained that she had never felt more uncomfortable in her life.

Joe came in, and his first question was, What had annoyed her? Nothing, said Cressida; then, suddenly remembering that she ought to be glad, she detailed the better news of rising hopes that had come from Seacombe. Joe expressed his pleasure, and signified that he too had good news. He was particularly wide awake and talkative all that evening, descanting on the increasingly favourable state of their affairs. The crops seemed likely to exceed their most brilliant expectations; he had had luck with one thing and another—in short, they had gained not only a firm footing, but taken a splendid start; a fact which he naturally thought, dwelt upon, could not fail to put Cressida into spirits also.

As Joe ran on, Cressida, who was listening and answering mechanically, was overcome by the dreariest feeling in the world—a sickening disgust with life, with men, and, O, that was the root of it—with herself.

The balm in Gilead her wounded vanity had sought had signally failed, it seemed, of its healing power in the end. Thoughts that had never molested her before came to taunt her to-night.

Supposing that Joe could establish them at Monks' Orchard to-morrow; supposing that she could have all those tangible realities of life to which she had allowed one thing after another to knock under, poured into her hands—wealth, pride, luxury, distinction, importance; supposing the whole neighbourhood were revering her as a benefactress and subject to her fascinations—would she be happy?

No.

Her life, so consistent in its egotism, had it, then, all been based on a mistake? Just at the moment when it seemed most successful she felt it most hollow, wanting as it were for something without which the pith of happiness cannot endure.

She appeared cheerful to her husband, but her well-acted gaiety jarred on herself. What she was feeling was incommunicable, and had its roots besides deep down in the past.

'Has Lefroy been here?' asked Joe presently.

'O yes, the whole afternoon,' sighed Cressida.

'I'm getting very tired of the man,' said Joe, who, however, only saw him occasionally.

'So am I,' said Cressida devoutly. 'Perhaps he won't be staying much longer now,' she added at random.

'At any rate, there's to be a fresh visitor at Monks' Orchard soon,' Joe rejoined. 'I met Mrs. de Saumarez driving to-day, and she tells me Lady Molly Carroll is coming down.'

CHAPTER XXIV.

SHIFTING WINDS.

RUMOURS, indeed, had just found their way to Elise's ears that a certain pretender—very

young, very steady, very rich, 'eligible' from every point of view—was paying court to Lady Molly. Reaching her at about the same time as an intimation from Alec that, his yachting cruise over, he might be looked for at Monks' Orchard some time in the course of the next month, it threw her into temporary energy. She saw the necessity of bestirring herself if she wished to save her pet scheme from coming to naught.

It was pretty clear that if Alec shilly-shallied any longer, the Honourable John Sterling, with his excellent character and excellent prospects to back it, would step in and carry off the Fair Maid of Devon before the year was out. Now Elise had watched Lefroy blowing his soap-bubbles, watched the progress of his last obstinate caprice, with some amusement, but also with a dim idea of a marriage disarranged between him and Jeanie Alleyne, and saw here another beacon of warning. Elise believed most men in these matters to be like straws in a current. It remained for her to try a bold stroke—ask down her goddaughter at once, letting it be understood that Alec was expected sooner or later, and infer generally from the reception with which her invitation should meet whether she had put off taking active measures till too late. Her plans went further. She knew that one grand wish of Lady Molly's heart was for her godmother to fulfil an old promise to take her over, some day, for a short trip to Paris. If all went well, the expedition might come off this autumn,—Alec would then make a third with them, of course. She hinted distantly at the scheme in her letter.

The invitation was accepted. Everything now depended on Alec,—whether he would come, and, having come, whether he

could be trusted to conduct himself in a reasonable manner.

He was not a boy, nor a waif and a stray by nature, with no dignity to forfeit like Lefroy. If, other considerations apart, there would have been danger of his drifting aside and losing the points of his compass, the presence of Lady Molly would be an effectual countercheck. Elise knew him well enough to feel positive that he would not lightly let go his aspirations in that quarter for the sake of playing *cavaliere servente* to Mrs. Kennedy for instance.

'And Lady Molly looks her very best in an agricultural medium,' concluded Mrs. de Saumarez judiciously, 'the country becomes her.' Cressida might outshine her in Paris or London; but in long walks, or riding or yachting or playing outdoor games, anywhere, in fact, in the open air, Lord Blackorton's daughter had nothing to fear from any one.

They would be sure to fight though, she supposed; they were so antagonistic. Cressida could never say live and let live to a queen in society. Lady Molly was accustomed to be counted supreme without an effort of her own. But the amusement of pitting rival beauties against each other in company was one from which, before now, Elise had found it possible to derive considerable amusement. When she had her young guest well secured under her roof, she wrote forthwith a diplomatic note to Alec, a note about every subject under heaven rather than Lady Molly Carroll, whose arrival she did mention *apropos* of something else, without a hint that the communication could be supposed to have special importance for him. Alec would understand just as well without being told, that she had done her best for him in that direction, think

the matter over, decide what he meant to do, and do it. In the mean time the girl must not be dull, and the Kennedys were engaged to meet her at dinner on the second evening after her arrival.

Joe with his *penchant* for gossip and match-making had long ago got wind of Elise's projects for Alec, and entered into them with animation. Cressida twitted him rather disdainfully on his interest in such feminine intrigues, which was disconcerting; but he could not hold his peace on the subject. He wanted his wife to see this beauty, whom he had met at Elise's house in Curzon-street, and described as a 'stunner,' but a stunner who 'looked at you from over the tip of her nose, as if she thought herself too high up aloft to trouble her head with the likes of you.'

Cressida expressed great curiosity, and felt some. Perhaps with prospective rivalry she disliked her already, divining a sort of elective antipathy between them. But nothing could better have served to take off the edge of any feeling beyond indifference with which she might otherwise have looked forward to Alec's reappearance at Monks' Orchard. Their meeting promised to be of the most prosaic description, and pointless, except for something very little flattering to herself, it must be owned.

Half affianced, or desirous so to be, to a girl who could command high respect from him, as well as admiration, how must he slight in his remembrance that wild love freak of his, and the object of it—the facile-seeming creature whose fancy and his had met! The thought that Alec should look down upon her had something peculiarly venomous in its sting. It crossed her now and then, making her feel rather desperate,

and ready to seize upon any refuge from it.

Thus she goes groping about blindly to escape from herself. Her poetic aspirations, her heart yearnings, her ideal aims—she has parted with those; or evaded them till they will serve her no longer; but, from the realities she *has* grasped, the kernel has somehow mouldered away, leaving her the husks only.

Going to dine at Monks' Orchard, to meet Lady Molly. On the way she felt as if bound for a tournament—looked forward to cutting out the beauty as part of the bill of fare of the evening, did not think it would be difficult somehow.

Elise rose to meet them as they entered, with her habitual lurking malicious smile and umpire-like expression. Lady Molly was sitting upon the ottoman, rather frigid and rigid—'a wooden doll, as I thought,' was Cressida's first comment. Simultaneously she perceived that Alec had come. With unexpected promptitude he had responded to Elise's indirect signal—telegraphing his arrival that very afternoon. At this moment he was sunk in a chair at some distance, looking rather like a person awaiting an operation. He gave a slight start, rousing himself when the visitors were announced. All this Cressida took in at a glance. As for Joe, he saw merely that there were three people in the room.

With Lefroy the circle was complete. Cressida fell to the artist, who found her more gracious than usual of late, at the same time felt her more distant. Alec's attention was almost entirely engrossed by his other neighbour the Fair Maid of Devon, and Cressida was not so taken up by the animated conversation she was carrying on with Lefroy but

she was able at the same time to observe them both.

Lady Molly was not a wooden doll. Before the second course was over Cressida had made this discovery, and modified, if not reversed, her first impression. The charm of individuality was not hers, it is true. Cressida seemed to have met scores of Lady Mollys—among the English visitors at Sorrento, at London balls and county gatherings. It was a familiar type enough, but a fine type; that she was quick to acknowledge. Her good looks were as incontestable as Alec's, though the pleasing impression they awoke was of a contrary kind. Fair hair, straight features, tall well-grown figure; add to this a frank, perfect self-repose and unstudied distinction of manner that carried weight and meaning, and went far. Lady Molly could not complain of her cavalier's want of attention to her during dinner. He seemed in excellent spirits, and bent on making himself agreeable in his best way to the fair girl by his side.

There was something peculiarly fascinating about him to-night, she thought. His manner, which to her had always been grave and problematical, had an infusion of some spirit, of which, if you could once think you were the cause, you had best see to it, if you would rather not have your head turned. Its very attractiveness embarrassed her faintly; and though she talked mostly to Alec, and thought him delightful, she felt more at her ease with Joe, who was on her left.

After dinner Elise frowned a little. Lady Molly and Joe, who had discovered that they belonged by birth to the same county, had, it appeared, a host of Devonshire acquaintances in common. On the subject of these various families

and their branches, in comparing notes as to what they knew about them, and discussing the fortunes and misfortunes of particular members—Lady Gertrude who had married, and Lady Isabel who had not; Herbert whom they wanted to get into Parliament, and Jack who had muffed his army examination for the second time—the two had fallen into a brisk conversation, that bade fair not to end soon. But such discussions are of the least interesting to all but those concerned, and Mr. Kennedy and Lady Molly were left to pursue theirs unmolested.

Cressida had gracefully taken up the task of entertaining the two gentlemen. She was giving Alec a mock description of the way they spent their days at the farm, making it as amusing as embellishment can, and calling Lefroy to witness to the truth of her statements respecting her triumphs as an amateur dairy-maid, milkmaid, and mistress of chickens and hens.

Little peals of laughter come from the trio every minute. Joe and Lady Molly are still so busy talking over the various masters of the hounds, the worthies and unworthies of the *crème de la crème* of Devonshire, that all else going on around is utterly lost upon them. Joe's five senses, indeed, always appear to himself to become a little blunted in a drawing-room. Hethoroughly approves of Lady Molly.

Elise, watching the pair, is struck by the curious similarity—an undeniable affinity exists between those two. Joe, with all his incarnate roughness and primitive ways, has a rare good breeding about him, a self-possession, uniform affability without parade that is the better stamp of a certain caste. Lady Molly is thoroughbred in all her points. There

is not the faintest germ of Bohemianism or volatility about either. It is Alec, beneath whose polished exterior and address lurks a rebel spirit that has slight dangerous kinship with the restless, wayward look haunting Cressida's face now and then.

Notwithstanding that, Joe and Molly, had Fate united them, would bore people in general and each other in particular, reflects Elise, and Alec and Cressida would quarrel in a week!

Presently Mrs. de Saumarez, to make a diversion, begged for some music. Lady Molly declined to perform, and Cressida expressed her disappointment politely. She had been so hoping to hear her—(feeling sure from her look that she would not play well). Cressida herself had lately taken a dislike to singing in company, and was deaf to Lefroy's entreaties on that point. Pressed to play, she excused herself at first. It was Alec who carried the point, by suddenly exclaiming aside, in a bored, half-comic, half-imploring tone, 'For mercy's sake, play *something*, Mrs. Kennedy!' And she complied, without thinking, though vexed with herself the next moment.

'I suppose it is of no consequence what?' she said, as she sat down to the piano, and began preluding gracefully. Alec had dutifully followed her to the instrument, and stood up behind her, as though acknowledging he had bound himself to listen, which in all probability the others would not. 'You wanted "something," and anything will do,' and she playfully began to run over a popular farcical air.

'I thought I could leave it to you,' said Alec, in a tone of disgust and significantly; at which she laughed, and modulated gently from Offenbach and burlesque into

Chopin and sentiment at his reproach. Certainly no one else was paying any attention to the notes. Joe and Lady Molly's stock of mutual local interests seem to be simply inexhaustible; Elise, provoked, but unable to help laughing at the reversed result of her tactics, turns to chat with Lefroy. Both are fond of music, but both prefer repartee.

'We were talking of an excursion to-day,' said Alec to Cressida presently, in a tone so pitched as not to clash with the music; 'this is Lady Molly's first visit to these parts, and she will expect us to show her the lions, of course. My mother has some idea of dragging us over to see Chiltern Abbey one day next week. Would you and Mr. Kennedy join us, I wonder? You ride, of course.'

'I daresay I could,' said Cressida mirthfully, 'and play on the violin too, if I tried; but I have never attempted one or the other.'

'Monstrous! he ejaculated, under his breath—'not riding, I mean. I cannot think how you manage to get on without it, down here in the country.'

'Mr. Kennedy has a horse that he is always intending to give me a trial with,' returned Cressida, 'only he never has time.'

'Then I should say he will scarcely be able to spare a day for Chiltern Abbey,' remarked Alec. 'What do you think?'

'O, people can always find time for what they want to do,' replied Cressida carelessly. 'And I think he wouldn't mind—might like it for a change.'

'Then my mother would go in the carriage; we'd send Lefroy with her.'—Cressida laughed furiously.—'You and Mr. Kennedy, Lady Molly and myself, on horseback for their outriders. That shall be it.'

Here Cressida's Notturmo

wound up rather abruptly, and Alec instantly began repeating his proposition aloud to the rest. Joe found himself besieged on all sides. He proved very tractable after the first, and in answer to the pressure put on him by Lady Molly and Elise promised to arrange to go somehow. As to Cressida's riding he demurred a little, but would not say no, even to that. He would try her with the horse the next morning, he said, and see how she got along.

On their drive home Mr. and Mrs. Kennedy had a little dispute. Subject: Lady Molly. Joe was loud in her praise. Such a jolly girl; no nonsense about her; as simple as possible; not a bit high and mighty when you came to talk to her. He could not get over his surprise at her knowing so many of the people he knew, nor the peculiar delight this coincidence afforded him. She knew all about the Howards and the Talbot-Steuarts and the Westons, and lots more of whom he had lost sight and was so glad to hear again.

Cressida, a little out of humour, and called upon to echo these encomiums, did her worst with faint praise instead. •But Joe stood up lustily for his fellow-countrywoman. No one with eyes in his or her head could deny that she was a very fine-looking girl, too, he added. O yes, handsome certainly, rejoined Cressida. She saw, indeed, good reason to fear that Lady Molly on horseback would leave her nowhere.

The next morning she made her first trial, and was pronounced by Joe to acquit herself very well. After exercising her on the horse two or three times he decided that it was all right; she had clearly a natural turn for the thing, and might make one of the riders when the party to the Abbey

came off, without any discomfort to herself or anxiety to others.

Cressida was glad. She had dreaded the idea of not passing her preliminary examination, and being ignominiously condemned to go with Elise and Lewis Lefroy in the carriage.

Chiltern Abbey, a famous Norman ruin about twelve miles from Lullington, was the staple excursion of the neighbourhood, one that people came down from London to make. Needless to add that neither the Kennedys nor Mrs. de Saumarez, being resident, had ever thought of making it. But Lady Molly must see the ruin, of course. The ride through the lanes was pleasant, the Abbey picturesque, and there was a little inn where a remarkably bad and remarkably expensive lunch awaited the unsuspecting tourist. Elise, however, being forewarned, had taken care to have half the carriage stocked with provisions before starting.

Joe rode by Cressida's side, giving her numberless hints on horsemanship, exceedingly careful of her, having still a few pangs as to her safety. Mrs. Kennedy felt put on her mettle, smothered her nervousness, and did her best not to behave like a novice. Was there not Lady Molly in front, an amazon to whom the mere notion of being clumsy or uncomfortable in the saddle was as inconceivable and laughable as seasickness to an old sailor? But Cressida's natural grace came to second her good-will, aided moreover by the paces of the animal, which were as favourable as possible to a beginner. His canter was as easy for the rider as the sway of a rocking-chair—too easy by half, Joe opined; made you think you could ride when you couldn't. But Cressida thought it was just as well.

'How are you getting on?' asked Alec, now and then, looking back; he was on ahead with Lady Molly.

'Finely,' replied Joe, who was very proud of his pupil; and well satisfied by the time they reached their destination that there was no cause for qualms of any sort on her account.

They left horses and carriages at the inn, lunched among the ruins, and spent the remains of the afternoon exploring the Abbey, lingering so long and so late that it was only when daylight was rapidly departing, cockchafers flying, mists gathering, and Elise had for some time been prophesying to her flock that they would be benighted or catch rheumatism, that she succeeded in getting everybody together and persuading Alec to order the horses to be sent round.

Cressida had enjoyed the day, feeling herself to a great extent the life of the party. Take her away, and how flat and tame and insipid it would have been by comparison! The reason was that she alone, of all those present, had the power of pleasing all those present. Even Lady Molly began to discover that Mr. Kennedy's wife was rather a charming person, in her way.

Now all the afternoon Cressida had been followed by an impression of a wish on Alec's part to secure her for a *tête-à-tête*. It might be purely imaginary; still, she found a slight pleasure, when she fancied he was manœuvring for it, in manœuvring to disappoint him. This was not difficult under the circumstances, and she had thus been avoiding him steadily, without seeming to, and had never addressed a word to him, or answered a question without contriving to bring the others into the conversation as well.

But whether tired of success or mollified by his submission and the slight depression she detected in his manner, as the day wore on her obstinacy waned a little. If he was bent upon making some allusion to the past, if there must be a scene, an explanation, perhaps it was best to let it come, and get it over. She was beginning to find something so awkward and artificial in their present relation that, as they would have to meet pretty constantly now, it started a question in her mind as to how long it would be possible to keep off a crisis of some sort.

After all, she mused, what should he have to say that she would object to hear? What can a man have to say to his old love—a man who is about to offer his hand and the remains of his heart to a proud high-spirited girl like Lady Molly Carroll, to settle down to a country life, making light of the follies of youth he leaves behind him? Nothing sentimental or very serious. *Cela va sans dire*.

Such at least was the conclusion to which she was already fast finding her way when they started on their ride homewards.

Joe, perceiving that Cressida was really quite at ease on horseback, forbore considerably during the return journey to tease her with incessant supervision, or instructions how to hold or not to hold the reins. She could quite well be trusted to manage for herself now. He fell to talking—talking horses—with Lady Molly. It was a subject on which she happened to be nearly as well informed as he, as was natural, riding having been not only her favourite exercise from a child, but the chief diversion her enforced secluded country life had afforded her.

The twilight still lingered; the warm afterglow of summer sunset rested on fields and thick-foliaged woods, before settling down into cold gray monochrome.

A few faint stars glimmered in the eastern sky; the west was still bright with dying flushes of gold and crimson, 'day and night contending.' Cressida, impressionable as ever to such things, and yielding to the lulling, sensuous influence of the scene, had become silent, dreamy, forgetful, letting her reins droop, and her horse lag some way behind the rest.

Suddenly becoming aware that she and Alec, who rode by her, had fallen very considerably into the rear, she started off her steed at a gallop abruptly. Alec kept alongside, but, stooping down, caught hold of her rein and checked the horse's pace dexterously, saying with decision,

'Now I really won't have you endanger your neck by furious riding, whilst I am here to prevent it.'

'Ah, so that is a sport you reserve for yourself and your furious driving,' said Cressida, flinging a look after the repartee to enforce it.

'Don't remind me of that,' he said, with a flash of impatience; adding, in a different tone with a short laugh, 'I was off my head that day, I think.'

'So do I,' Cressida replied definitively; 'that is exactly what I meant, and I confess I would rather my general should be "all there," as they say. I may have stood fire without flinching on that occasion; but I cannot pretend to be an amazon. I'm very easily daunted, I must tell you. At the risk of being despised ever after by you and your party, I confess that I've suffered innumerable pangs of dismay in the course

of our expedition, which I've suppressed with Spartan fortitude, as I knew that you would all laugh at me. I envy Lady Molly. She has strong nerves, I think.'

She glanced at him exploringly, and he at her likewise. But both countenances were guarded and distant, and told nothing.

'Lady Molly is accustomed to riding, and all that sort of thing,' said Alec presently. 'She has spirit enough, as you say, and is certainly not to be dismayed by a kicking horse. Yet I fancy that in most cases she might be less able to astonish people by her courage and presence of mind than some others—yourself, now.'

'One can't have everything,' said Cressida, with sententious mockery.

'Have you found that out?' returned Alec, with a sharp significance that startled her.

She raised her eyes, aroused, defiant, thinking instinctively, 'Now for some impertinence.' His look disarmed her; she could not say why, any more than when a better fencer than you knocks your foil out of your hand, you can say exactly how he did it; as he politely invites you to pick it up, and begin again, if you please.

'I mean,' he explained, after a pause, 'that though the truism you throw at me sounds so unmeaning and commonplace, it's often nothing of the sort when you come to the acting of it out.'

Cressida was silent.

'For instance,' he continued speculatively, 'how many chances that come to one in life one throws over, for fear of what people may say or think! As if the best they could say could possibly make up to one for some things!'

Cressida still did not reply; she was letting her thoughts run on, following out the train of speculation started.

Joe and Molly were barely out of earshot in front. One or the other of them glanced round now and then to cry, 'Come on!' and Alec would shout back, 'All right!'

'Do you never regret anything?' said Alec abruptly by and by.

'I don't know. I might sometimes; but I hate looking back, and when I can help it I never do. It is of no use.'

'That's the worst of it,' he observed; 'that for chances once lost there should never be any resurrection, you know.'

Cressida laughed ironically.

'One must be wise in time.'

He laughed too as he rejoined, 'O, and so one would, oftener, at least, if wisdom and folly were cut-and-dried things that couldn't ever be mistaken. But isn't it hard sometimes to tell which is which? Might it not happen, for instance, that what might be wisdom in him and in her would be folly in you or in me?'

'What do you mean?' asked Cressida coldly.

'Mean?' he repeated, with marked surprise; then in an altered, colder tone, 'But I was forgetting—I always do forget, that marriage is understood to be a sort of end all, and that you women, at least, succeed in forgetting from that day onward everything that has gone before in your life.'

'That they do not,' replied Cressida bitterly. 'O, how I wish that they did, that they could!'

'You wish that?' he repeated quickly. 'Just as I said, then, you expect me to pretend to you that we have never met, or to make as though we had always been strangers, and I had never felt for you something that stands quite alone, and that I, at all events, shall certainly never forget. And you want me to ignore it.'

His manner took her by surprise; it was distant, but almost painfully earnest. So far all was true; some pretty strong feeling was forcing from him a kind of protest that nevertheless was not easy and pleasant to speak.

'When I heard of your marriage,' he resumed, 'I felt,—forgive me,—like a man who's been robbed,—had his bride stolen.' He laughed constrainedly, and went on, in the same deprecating tone: 'If, when we met here before, I was mad—as you say—it was for you. I never thought of anything else; you could have made me do whatever you wished. Your marriage brought me to my senses, though, putting an end to everything, for ever.'

Confess it, she was not displeased to find that even now he could not meet her with indifference, that the hold she there had taken had been stronger than she thought. There was nothing in Alec's manner at the present moment to offend, and a great deal to appeal to her. He could feel his way through the most delicate labyrinth, and never boggle or go astray.

However, for all reply, she glanced from his stirred troubled countenance to the figure of Lady Molly, just visible before them through the mist. Alec, quick to interpret, lowered his head with a sign of avowed assent, and a look as much as to say, 'You would have it so.' But presently he resumed in a lighter tone, and forcing a laugh, 'After all, I think it is rather too hard of you to insist on depriving me of my recollections, and just now in particular, when time, place, and circumstance are all conspiring against me. How can you expect me to be obedient, however hard I try? But since you wish it, I'll promise not to think of it more than I can

help, never to talk to you about it at all, and to occupy myself solely and entirely with the prospect of the golden future that may be before me.'

Cressida smiled and signed assent and approval. Ah, Alec might say to her what he pleased—talk like a victim of the prospect before him; she knew perfectly well that so far from despising it, his head and possibly his heart were set on realising it. He wished to be friends with her if he could, and that was all; Alec never liked to lose what he had won, and the strange part of it was that he rarely did. When he spoke again it was on a totally different and indifferent subject—the last play brought out in Paris. He had been there lately, run over from Folkestone, where his yacht was lying at present; thence the conversation turned on French plays in general, and they went on comparing Parisian notes till Monks' Orchard was reached, and they parted company at the farm.

Cressida owned to having enjoyed her ride immensely. Joe was also in grand good-humour with everybody. Lady Molly had expressed a wish to inspect the farm, and made Alec promise to bring her over one of these days,

when they were going to have some ferrets.

'She's too good for him,' remarked Joe sagely, 'don't you think so?'

'O, a great deal,' replied Cressida promptly.

'But he'll improve, I expect, under her tuition, when they're married. If she takes him she'll keep him in order. I think it's a case, you know.'

'I suppose so,' she said indifferently.

Reviewing in her mind all that had passed between herself and Alec, Cressida felt glad on the whole that they had had what might pass for their explanation. She fancied they might henceforth be on more natural terms.

Alec, after the riding-party broke up, was wilfully silent, absent, and moody for the rest of the way. His self-content was interfered with by two discoveries he was making—first, that neither Lady Molly Carroll nor any other woman in the world would ever have for him the charm that Mrs. Kennedy possessed; and next, that she was extremely unhappy.

It seemed to him extremely natural. Was he glad of it? No. Better for him on all accounts perhaps had it been otherwise. So much he realised dimly.

(To be continued.)

CLUB CAMEOS.

A Literary Man.

THE successful man of letters at the present day has little to complain of. Time was when he had to haunt the antechambers of the great, to badger the whole circle of his acquaintance for subscriptions, and to sell his political opinions to the first statesman who wanted them, ere he could eke out a livelihood sufficient to liberate him from the clutches of the sheriff's officer and from the dens of the Fleet. It was a red-letter day with him when he had received his ten guineas for a dedication to a peer who wished to pose as a patron of letters at a modest cost, or when his list of subscribers was full enough to justify him to go to press with his new volume, or when he was offered a collectorship in the Customs or the Revenue because his squibs and his satire had been useful to a Minister. In those 'dark ages' of literature the reading public was limited, and the author, unless favoured by the great or the State, soon found that his audience was too small or too indifferent to support him.

One little source of pride, however, remained to him ; he might have to starve as Otway starved ; he might have to find his bed, like Savage, on the garbage of the market-place ; he might be ill-clad, dunned, and arrested ; but he was an *author*—a man of culture whose opinions were respectfully listened to, who received the homage of the set in which he lived, and whose pen commanded for him a consideration that he

would not otherwise have obtained. Authorship was then, not as now a profession, but a distinction. To have written a book, whether it succeeded or was damned, was in itself an accomplishment which raised the writer a full head and shoulders above the common herd. It qualified him for admission into society, it ushered him into the presence of the powerful, he was treated with deference by all, saving those who had pecuniary relations with him, and he was regarded as amongst the notables of the coffee-house that he frequented. If his book was talked about, and he was born under the star of a Minister who encouraged letters and the fine arts, he might find himself performing the duties of a sinecure commissionership, and drawing a handsome salary from the Treasury. He might hold the seals of a Secretary of State like Addison ; he might be a Commissioner of Appeals like Locke ; or Master of the Mint like Newton ; or a Commissioner of Stamps like Steele ; or attached to embassies as were Gay, Prior, and Stepney.

It was, however, all a question of luck. If a Minister like Walpole or the second Pitt stood at the helm of government, the author, the poet, and the satirist had a hard time of it. No snug post under the Crown then fell to his lot ; he was attached to no embassies ; his old age was cheered by no pensions ; as he had made his bed so must he lie upon it. 'If you are such a damn-

ed fool,' said Sir Robert Walpole, with his characteristic delicacy of feeling, to a poor author, 'as to follow a trade that does not pay, you have only yourself to blame. If the State is to help all who have been unsuccessful in their calling the Exchequer would be empty to-morrow, and I do not see why the country should assist one whose books publishers cannot sell, or whose plays managers cannot act, more than he who fails in any other form of business.' Had old Sam Johnson lived in the reign of Queen Anne, a high government appointment would have effectually relieved him from slaving for the publishers and from the drudgery of hack-work. On the other hand, had Congreve lived in the days of George II. or of George III. he would simply have remained a writer for the stage, and been dependent upon his own exertions for his income. The pursuit of literature was in itself a miserable occupation; it might lead to advantages, but such advantages were unconnected with the calling of authorship pure and simple. Until the present century, with the exception of Pope and Dryden, it is doubtful whether any single author managed to subsist comfortably upon the profits that arose from the sale of his works. Sir Walter Scott was accustomed to say that the pursuit of literature was a bad staff, but a good stick; in the 'good old times,' however, the calling of a man of letters was neither a staff nor a stick, but the slenderest of reeds.

Happily a healthier state of things has been ushered in. Education has been busy with the masses, circulating-libraries have been established, cheap newspapers flood the land with their broadsides, and the consequence is that a vast reading public, eager

after novelty and attractive information, has been called into existence. A man who hits the literary taste of the day is sure, not only of popularity, but of the substantial rewards of ready money. He need not pander to the cheap vanity of a patron; there is no necessity for him to go hat in hand begging for subscribers, nor has the penurious certainty of a government appointment attractions for him. His patron is the public, and as long as it reads his works, so long will publishers gladly pay him for his wares and the libraries order their hundreds of copies. Literature is now a profession, like law or medicine, and the successful author is of the same rank and receives the same homage as any other successful professional man. The mere fact of having written a book in these days, when everybody reads and almost everybody writes, is in itself no mark of distinction; should the work make a 'hit,' the author is treated by the world with the same consideration that it accords to the rest of the pedestrians who have distanced their fellows on the high-road to fame. He is a fortunate man, precisely as the barrister whose tables are covered with briefs is a fortunate man, or the doctor who is gaining a large practice, or the engineer who is full of contracts, or the merchant who freely prospers are fortunate men. The days are past when an author is stared at by society because a publisher has given his manuscript to the world. We worship success of all kinds, and if our friend of the pen becomes talked about we follow in his train, yet not, as in the days of the Tudors and the Stuarts, because he is a writer, but because he is successful. Literature has no longer a pedestal to itself, but takes its place in the sculpture-

gallery with the rest of the statuary, and is bought and criticised like the other figures that surround it, and vulgarly valued for what it will fetch. The divinity that once hedged round the author has departed, and in its stead is the tradesman with his scale of profits and losses, and who knows to an ounce what is the true estimate of 'copy.' Empty homage has given way to solid bullion.

That the calling of a successful literary man is not to be despised is evidenced by the career of one of the pillars of the Caravanserai, familiarly called 'Jimmy.' Why he should be known as Jimmy, considering that his name, according to the wishes of his godfather and godmother, is Hugh, and the patronymic is Lister, it is beyond me to discover. One thing I know is that he is always called Jimmy, and to speak of him as Lister is to brand oneself as an ignoramus, an outsider, and utterly unworthy of membership of the Caravanserai. Quite a representative man is Jimmy. In the smoking-room his easy-chair is always the centre of attraction; for his stories are amusing, his conversation witty, and he possesses precisely that information upon things in general and scandal in particular which is suited to the hour of two o'clock in the morning. He is the great authority in the club upon literature, the drama, and the fine arts. The gossip of the greenroom is at his fingers' ends; and he is not reticent upon the feuds of actors and the witcheries of actresses. He knows all the new works that are coming out, what novels are to be naughty or insipid, and explains all the mysterious allusions in the newspapers, and the classical quotations that may crop up in the course of talk or perusal. Hav-

ing once painted a picture that was rejected, he developed into the art-critic of a leading journal, and his remarks, if biting, are amusing upon the intrigues of the Royal Academy, the jealousies of artists, and upon that burlesquing of Nature which English people call art.

He is a general favourite, for he has a great deal in his power, and is not unlavish in its disposal. The newspaper of which he is editor and part proprietor is always open to puff his friends who write books, paint pictures, or mould busts; he is always ready, unless in the full swing of the parliamentary season, to spare a paragraph for the achievements of the 'spring-captains' and the 'sportsmen' who are amongst the number of his acquaintance—for their Alpine ascents, their rowing-matches against time, their hunting of the big game in South America, or their racing, driving, yachting, running deeds. His pen and kindly words are ever prompt to introduce a friend, or friend's friend, who is supposed to have literary or artistic talent, to the publishers, the picture-dealers, and the editors of magazines and reviews. From his journalistic position and his acquaintance with managers and actors he seldom lacks orders for the theatre and the opera, and when these are in his possession he generously gives them to those in the club who he thinks will most appreciate the present—barristers whose briefs have not yet arrived, young government clerks whose seniors decline to make way for them, soldiers on half-pay, and the like. The well-to-do suppliants—and it is astonishing how many of the wealthy petition for orders—he dismisses with a caustic gibe at their meanness to the libraries and box-offices.

Whenever anything is to be done and wherever anything is to be seen there to be sure is Jimmy. If an ironclad is going to be launched, a new bridge to be opened, a grand field-day to be held at Aldershot, a naval review to take place at Spithead, or a banquet to be given to a distinguished personage, Jimmy is certain to be presented with a card. And as for the tickets for race-meetings, 'first nights,' private views at exhibitions, concerts, City dinners, and for all the other forms of the external dissipation of London society that crowd his looking-glass and mantelpiece, their number is legion. No wonder, then, that a man who has so much in his gift, who is such excellent company, and who is the most perfect of hosts, should be much sought after and be deemed the most popular of good fellows. He has but one enemy, and that is his tailor, whom he will never permit to dress him in the fashion; Jimmy running to flesh prefers his habits loose, and declines to be buttoned up and puckered and encased in the manner sartorial art delights in.

It is not unusual with me to cross the Park of a morning, and call upon Jimmy at his well-furnished chambers in Victoria-street whilst he is breakfasting at an hour when ordinary people are lunching. When I enter his rooms and criticise their luxurious appointments—the easy-chairs, the valuable engravings, the skin rugs, the rare books, the specimens of Capo di Monte and Sèvres that jut out from the wall on velvet brackets, the old brass and mirrors and oak cabinets—or watch their owner enjoying life to the full, surrounded by all that modest ambition can desire, the thought frequently crosses my mind, How different is the fate of Hugh Lis-

ter from that of many of his predecessors !

When I see Jimmy giving his little dinners at the club at a certain well-known round table, the waiters active and attentive, the chief butler himself superintending the serving of the dishes, the champagne iced to perfection, the claret warmed with the most consummate care—I think of the men, better read than he, and endowed with greater talents, who knew not where to turn for a meal or a couch, calling themselves lucky if they could dine at a tripe-shop or pay for the shelter of a garret. I think of the author of *Venice Preserved* choking himself over the food, from which he had been so long deprived, in the fierce greed of hunger; of the ill-starred Savage crouching for warmth before the lurid ashes of a glass furnace; of the great Orientalist, the translator of the Koran, pursuing his studies amid the severest privations; of old Sam Johnson, hidden behind the screen in the publisher's dining-room, because his coat was too ragged to admit him to the table of his host; of Steele, Goldsmith, Smollett, Fielding, Crabbe, Chatterton, and the hundred and one other brothers of the pen, who knew often what actual want was, what misery was, what pain left to itself was, and what followed from the grasp of the sheriff's officer! When I see Jimmy on his famous three-hundred-guinea cob, well up to eighteen stone, and whose head and crest and quarters are one of the great objects of attraction and admiration in the Row, or driving his high-stepping pair of chestnuts about the town or the suburbs, there rise before me visions of palesad faces who have had to part with their manuscripts, their poems, their satires, their tragedies, their essays and novels, for a tenth

or a twentieth of the sum our nineteenth-century scribe gives for one of his horses. Did not Milton sell his incomparable epic for the price of a new saddle? Can you buy a stanhope at a good maker's for what Goldsmith sold his *Vicar of Wakefield*? Did not Dryden engage himself to write ten thousand verses for less than the price of an opera-box for the season? Was not *Evelina* parted with by Miss Burney at the price of a frock-coat? And pray what did the men of letters under the first three Georges make out of literature? But perhaps the saddest of all reflections is how fared it with the men, then as now, who could find no publisher to take their wares, whose tastes and peculiarities of character unfitted them for the ordinary occupations of life, who read and wrote in the hope of one day receiving their reward and having their niche in the Temple of Fame, only to find their end in the gaol, the hospital, or the terrible exit of the suicide? As I write there stands out against the background of the past the lean haggard form of one I knew, who busied himself with subjects that appealed to the few, who degenerated into a publisher's hack; then even that calling failed him, for others could be found to do the work cheaper; who was poor unto misery, yet neither his garb nor conversation revealed his sorrows, for the pride of manhood made him keep his poverty to himself, till anxiety and suffering bade him one fatal day brave the terrors of the unknown, and put an end to the life, whose burden was greater than he could bear, by his own hand. Poor soul! had one but known how severe was the measure the Fates had dealt out to him, he needed not have been fearful again of distress or priva-

tion; gladly subscriptions would have been raised for him: but he kept us all in ignorance of his affairs, and whilst we mourn his reserve, we cannot but respect the pride and pluck that dictated it. How many suffering hearts have thus passed to their rest, conscious of the genius working within them, their brains stored with the intellectual accumulations of ages, yet rudely ignored by the times in which their lot was cast, whilst the empty and the frivolous were the idols of the hour! The author of *Cato* was right—to command success is not always to deserve it. Life is but a lottery, and it is quite as often that a prize is drawn by a fluke as by desert.

Not that by this digression I am inferring that Jimmy is not deserving of his prosperity. Far from it; no man works harder or is more worthy of the success that attends him: only there are others to the full as able as himself, and who work quite as assiduously, yet somehow their names are known to the few, and their wares have little market value. Let us see how Jimmy raised himself to the position of a favourite of Fortune. The son of an ex-cavalry officer, who was atoning for the dissipation of his youth and the loss of the paternal acres over hazard by strict economy at the little town of Dinan in Brittany, young Lister received his first education at the hands of the parish priest, a Jesuit well schooled in mathematics and who knew the classics as his Breviary. Sharp, studious, and a keen observer of all that fell within his ken, the lad was a most promising pupil, and soon showed of what he was capable. He was sent to a grammar-school in Kent which had numerous exhibitions at Oxford; two of these young Lister gained, and passed himself through the Uni-

versity without costing his impecunious parent a single sou. Disappointed in obtaining a fellowship, he came to London and entered himself at the Bar. He had his name printed in the blackest of letters on the yellowest of backgrounds, he went circuit, he went sessions, he attended the courts at Westminster; but solicitors declined to honour him with their patronage. At last he put his wig in its tin box, hung up his gown, and betook himself to that great refuge of the unsuccessful forensic mind—journalism. He had succeeded to the family property of two hundred a year, and what with reviews, magazine articles, and occasional leaders, he managed to live in Dryden's Buildings, not uncomfortably, nay with splendour compared to many of the barristers who lodged on his staircase. Finding that works of imagination, if successful, were the most lucrative of all literary productions, he wrote a novel. It was rejected by the trade. Young authors, take heart from this, and be not cast down! The first novel of the popular Jimmy was refused; why, then, need you despair? Think of the unaccepted, and you will not be in bad company. Was not *Robinson Crusoe* hawked about from firm to firm? And how fared it with *Vanity Fair* and *Jane Eyre*? What is the general fate of first efforts? What are Raphael's 'Dream' and Gibbon's *History of Switzerland* but miserable failures? Were not the first appearances of Kean, Kemble, and Mrs. Siddons cordially hissed? Were not the first speeches of Walpole, Canning, Erskine, Grantan, Disraeli in the House of Commons utter failures? Success! what is success but the result of failure? *Mon ami*, if you have never been a fool, you will never

be a wise man; if you have never failed, you will never be successful. The best across country are not those who have had the fewest falls.

Mortified at his failure, Jimmy vowed that he would court Imagination no more; and, with a sneer, said that he would leave that sphere 'to the women.' It is astonishing how savage were his reviews on all the novels that crossed his path at this time, and how highly moral were the reproofs he directed against the frivolity of the public taste. Certain social topics then being discussed, Jimmy took the matter up, infused his humour and classical culture into the question, and wrote a few letters signed 'R. S. V. P.' to that great journal the *Trimmer* upon the subject. They were inserted, and led to his permanent engagement on the staff. His letters, with the signature 'R. S. V. P.,' on international law, the *demi-monde*, penny ices, cheap divorces, gamekeepers' fees, matrimonial economy, justices' justice, tips to servants, state of the nation, state of Rotten Row, model farms, baby-farms, what to do with your manure, what to do with your poor—in short, on anything and everything, were regarded by the public mind with the respect and consideration accorded only to the epistles of the most brilliant writers of the day, who occasionally, through the medium of the *Trimmer*, kindly advise the estates of the realm how to act, the law-officers of the Crown how to legislate, the bench how to decide, and society generally how to behave.

For the next few years Hugh Lister led the ordinary life of the literary man-of-all-work. He wrote reviews on books of all classes—from an encyclopædia to an Oriental grammar—by studying the pre-

face and deriving his information from the pages he criticised, then winding up with praise or abuse, according to the state of his liver and the bother the volumes gave him. He wrote essays, pamphlets, magazine articles, a volume of travels, which was read and forgotten, and edited a classical author. It was at this time that he painted the head of a cardinal, which he fancied was, for shade and colouring, worthy of Rembrandt, and sent the canvas to the Royal Academy. As I have said, it was not accepted. One member of the hanging committee, as he examined it, said he was prepared for anything from an English artist, but he must really draw the line at sign-boards. Genial and good-tempered as are naturally most burly men who are not troubled with matrimony or pecuniary anxieties, it is a sure 'draw' to get Jimmy on the subject of art. His ire is hot and his invectives unbounded when he dilates upon that close borough, the Royal Academy. As Liston imagined that tragedy was his *forte*, so Lister sneers at his literary fame, and thinks that art should have been his calling, and that he should be handed down to posterity, not as a Fielding, but as a Raphael.

So some fifteen years passed away since Hugh Lister quitted the cloisters of Alma Mater. Beyond the literary circle in which he lived he was almost unknown; his friends recognised his talents, and wondered why he had allowed his intellectual inferiors to distance him in the race of life. Great things had been anticipated from him by all in his set, still he had not realised the expectations formed of him. Men not worthy to clean his inkstand were drawing their hundreds from the publishers and were household names

at the libraries, whilst he was still grinding away at journalism and hack-work. At last the hour came, and the man was found ready.

Whilst fishing in Scotland, Hugh Lister was laid on his back with rheumatism. Immured in a little Highland village, unable to stir out, free from the excitement of society and the interruption of friends, as he slowly recovered he bethought himself of a story, and set to for the second time to write a novel. His experience of life had matured; he had always been a keen observer of character; his sense of toleration had deepened; his powers of sarcasm, humour, pathos, had widened in their range and increased in intensity. He took Balzac and Fielding as his models; he wrote leisurely and thought much; two years he spent over his work, and then gave it to the public. The time had not been wasted. The book was one exactly suited to the cynical, genial, religious, infidel, ostentatious, retiring spirit of the age, and its success was unbounded. It dissected character, especially female character; it laid bare the selfishness of human nature; it lashed the vices of society and held up the mirror to the world, so that it saw itself, not flattered or distorted, but faithfully reflected. We love to be told of our faults and virtues, especially when we attribute all the virtues to ourselves and burden our neighbour with the faults.

The future of Hugh Lister was assured. He was the Balzac of the day, and anything from his pen found a ready market. Since his first venture he has written numerous works, some good, some bad, some indifferent, but all commanding a large sale and handsomely swelling their author's banking account.

A great man is Jimmy now. He dines with dukes and bishops ; he lectures in America ; he is a member of several learned societies ; he takes the chair at literary meetings ; he is a member of a far more exclusive club than the Caravanserai ; he has declined a seat in Parliament ; he is said to be a millionaire, but perhaps an income of four thousand a year is the more accurate statement. When I read Jimmy's books and wince under his satire and caustic cynicism, and then see him at the club, his fat sides shaking with laughter, his hand ever ready to help a friend, always generous, kind, and good, it strikes me what a difference there often is between what a man *writes* and what a man *is*. I wonder whether 'goody' authors in their private lives are acid, spiteful, and stingy ? Satirists are often the pleasantest of fellows ; but may it be forgiven if I say that moralists and the gushing division have occasionally been found far from agreeable society ? We all of us have a certain amount of spleen to get rid of : the literary cynic vents it on paper, the literary gusher on his friends. Which do you prefer ?

Whilst at the zenith of his prosperity Hugh Lister resolved to carry out an idea that he had long meditated. As most actors are ambitious of developing into managers, so many men who have been engaged in journalism are desirous of being at the head of a newspaper. Lister thought he saw his way to start a new organ, and being well supported by a few sanguine peers of the Moderado party, and by three or four wealthy City men, began to put his scheme into execution. The journal was to be conducted on certain novel principles. It was to be written by gentlemen for gentlemen ; private secretaries

were to communicate what official information they could impart ; men thoroughly in society were to give the tittle-tattle of the day — gossip which could be relied upon and not contradicted in the next number ; the leaders were to be written by the best brains that money could buy ; foreign correspondents were to receive the salaries of ambassadors, and furnish the latest intelligence from the capitals to which they were accredited ; the dramatic, literary, and artistic criticisms were to be in the hands of men who had been encouraged by success, and not soured by failure, and who were to have no crotchets or personal animosities ; the City article was to be intrusted to a firm of such wealth and position as to render it like Caesar's wife, above suspicion ; the ladies were to be propitiated by articles on the fashions direct from the work-rooms of the great Paris men-milliners themselves ; whilst hospitality was to be encouraged by the proprietors of the journal giving every fortnight magnificent 'breakfasts' at their offices to the illustrious and the fashionable of the London world.

During the winter months the proposed newspaper was fully talked about in society and at the clubs, and well ventilated by stimulating paragraphs in the press. Early in the season the first number of the *Piccadilly Courier* made its appearance. Its success was never one moment in doubt. It was so well printed, and on such charmingly-toned paper, that the blind could almost read it. It was so well informed on all the subjects of which it treated, that to doubt its accuracy was like doubting infallibility. On all sides it had friends ; never did a journal steer so cleverly between extremes

without running aground or shattering its circulation by bad editorial navigation. The aristocracy liked it because it was properly deferential to privilege and prerogative, and held a right view (that meant an aristocratic view) upon the land question, game-laws, and all vested interests. The middle classes liked it because it took a just view (that meant a mercantile view) upon all commercial subjects, and advocated freedom in trade, general progress, and the most complete toleration. Pious people liked it because it was Catholic without Popery, and Protestant without Dissent. Worldlings liked it because it was witty, cynical, and epigrammatic in its observations upon men and manners. Society generally liked it because it told it exactly what it wanted to know without being cruelly malicious or impertinently inquisitive. The 'breakfasts' were a most successful institution, and ladies fought over the possession of cards as they fight over anything which is new and the rage. In short, the *Piccadilly Courier* at one bound placed itself at the head of journalism, had its claims allowed, and has since declined to be ousted from its proud position.

And now it was that Hugh Lister became a great personage in London society, and was christened Jimmy. It was said that he knew everything, could make anybody, and was in the most intimate confidence of the Cabinet and the royal family. He was a lion in club smoking-rooms. He went to all the great parties in the season, and to all the great country houses in the autumn. He had his portrait painted—not after Rembrandt—and hung in the Academy. When he walks out or rides in the Row people nudge each other and say, 'See

that fellow! that's Lister, the great novelist and editor of the *Piccadilly*!' He is one of the sights of London, like the Monument or the Tower. Yet wealth and fame and flattery sit very well on him. Success is like wine—some men it exhilarates, some men it makes sulky, some it does not affect. Jimmy is of the last order. Prosperous, celebrated, fêted, he is the same joyous, genial, epicurean being that he was when he was working his steps up the ladder of fame.

Rest on your well-won laurels, Jimmy, most stanch of friends and cheeriest of companions! Long may your brain teem with its present fertility, and never may you Swift-like 'wither from the top'! Long may the charms of music delight you, the little dishes you love—alas, too well!—nourish you, the drama amuse you, tobacco solace you, and the life you so thoroughly enjoy be preserved in all its vigorous completeness! It will be a sad day for those you leave behind when your burly form is missed, those chatty lips silenced, and that joyous, hearty, unmusical laughter heard no more. Ay, and it will be a sadder day to the struggling author you have so generously befriended, to the unknown actress whom your praise has encouraged to further efforts, to the wearied reporter, the worn-out press-man, and to the whole community of the sick and afflicted, when you have been summoned hence, and have joined the majority. But why talk of the urn and the cypress? *Non omnis moriar*. In the hearts of your friends you will always live, and when they cease to beat Literature will enshrine you amongst her favourites, and jealously guard your name for posterity.

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER XII. BERNESE TERRITORY.

WHEN it reaches Bern, the 'Venice of the Alps,' the Aar suddenly resumes its wild impetuosity of character. It begins to hesitate and to struggle, and persistently refuses to go forward. Like a child clinging to its mother's gown, it throws its two arms round the town, and seems to want to turn round and go back. Five times does it twist and turn to the west, six times to the north, and three times to the south and east, thus forming the various promontories of Kirchenfeld, Bremgarten, and Engi, as well as the one upon which the town of Bern is built. But soon after this it is joined by the sister river from Freiburg, the lively Saane, and from the north comes the irresistible voice of old Father Rhine, calling them to meet him at Waldshut, whence he carries them in his strong arms down to the great ocean. And so, farewell to the beautiful Aar! Her career is a blessed one, joyous and joy-giving, and assuredly right royal; for the whole of the great Bernese Oberland, and all the cantons through which she passes, belong to her, so that she has every right to assume as her badge the 'Aar,' or eagle of the Alps, the proud bird which appears in the armorial bearings of many of the towns which stand upon her banks, such as Aarberg, Aarburg, Aarau. This was the royal eagle which collected the materials for the grand nest in the heart of the canton which was

once an imperial free town, and is now the capital of the Swiss Confederacy. Bern has the river to thank for her proud position; for it was the Aar which converted the solid sandstone rock upon which the town stands into a promontory, and made it such a peculiarly favourable site for the central stronghold of a growing power.

Where else could Bern be placed to such advantage?

As we look upon the grave old town grouped around the cathedral, looking so resolute and determined, with brown mediæval towers rising here and there above the mass of houses, standing on its elevated rocky platform, in the midst of a lovely pastoral landscape, it looks like some esquire in full armour, leaning upon his sword, while he keeps a defiant watch over the herdsmen and peasants at his feet, and gazes dreamily at the distant mountains.

Zürich, which is a shining light to the whole Confederacy, has taken the arts and sciences under her especial protection; golden Basel has devoted herself to commerce; and Bern is the heart and core of Switzerland, the stronghold of unity and the trusty defender of the whole country.

Though gloomy and defiant-looking when seen from without, the town is pleasant enough within, for she keeps her best and most amiable side for her own people and for visitors, while she

presents a rough front to her enemies.

Many people think the town monotonous, and declare that the gray uniform houses and long streets remind them of a large convent and its cloisters; and they even go so far as to say that the regularity of the lines and the want of variety in the buildings are reproduced in the countenances of the inhabitants, which are dull and expressionless. Others again fancy that it has too much the air of a small country town which has grown rich by traffic in cheese and butter, and that its features are all of a stunted dwarfish character, wherein it much resembles all the natives of Switzerland, who are usually undersized. But even if it be so, if everything in Bern be short, stumpy, and solid, at all events it possesses a distinct character of its own, and a very good sort of character too, which ought to secure some interest for it in these levelling times. Moreover, it is thanks to this very solidity that Bern has been able for the last seven centuries to make her way and hold her own in the face of severe competition; and it was her solidity alone which enabled her to stand in the breach and cope with an emperor, almost before she was out of leading-strings. Rudolf certainly had cause to respect young Bern's strength; and his dwarf, noticing how stout and sturdy was the town's demeanour, prophesied that, 'sooner or later, she would be mistress over the whole land.' Had she been consumptive and slender-waisted, no doubt she would have been more tractable and submissive, but she would never have come to anything. The people of Bern are very much like their town, and you may read their character in their faces. They are generally hard and

wooden-looking, but they also look independent, comfortably contented, proud, and sometimes supercilious. Grace and elegance are by no means characteristic of a Bern citizen, who certainly does not move as if he were treading upon eggs. Indeed, some mischievous people have been heard to declare that, in the course of centuries, he has grown very like the bear, which is the badge of his town; and they assert that it is from a sort of relation-like interest and fellow-feeling that he pays a visit to the Bears' Ditch, near the Nydeck Bridge, at least once a week.

Truly the bear of Bern is no empty myth, for wherever a house, fountain, gateway, or monument is erected, Bruin's effigy is sure to make part of the design. Whether the founders of the town floated down the Aar till they came to the famous wood 'Im Sack,' near the spot where the river is now spanned by the Unter-Thor Bridge, and whether they were here found and nursed by a she-bear after the fashion of Romulus and Remus, tradition does not say; but one thing is certain, namely, that what the wolf and the Capitoline geese are to Rome, that the noble Bruin, the kindest of all the wild animals of Germany, is to Bern.

Strangers who visit Bern, even if they find nothing to their taste in the town itself, will hurry to the lofty terrace at the back of the minster, and will gaze with longing hearts at the world of glittering mountains which is thence visible. The Platform, as this terrace with its rows of shady chestnut-trees is called, is a sublimely beautiful spot, a perfect elysium of delight; for besides the ordinary view of the Alps, which you may enjoy when the atmosphere is clear at any and



CASTLE OF BURGDORF.

* every hour of the day, you have such sunrises and sunsets as are hardly to be seen anywhere except from the Rigi or some equally famous height.

We may vary our walk by going to the Engi Terrace, outside the Aarberg Gate. This is a much less secluded spot than the Platform, for it is a very favourite resort, and as it is provided with a restaurant, colonnades, tables, and benches, the scene which goes on here under the spreading trees in summer evenings is a very lively one. With Reichenbach beer, good coffee, and seed-cakes, some people will find the sunset view of the Alps doubly enjoyable. The great Bremgarten Wood begins close by here.

Many people, however, consider that both the Platform and the Engi Terrace are surpassed by the Schänzli, or Bastion, on the right bank of the Aar, to the north of the town, whence you have a good view of Bern as well as of the distant prospect. This, however, is a matter of taste, and it is fortunate that there is so much to choose from that every one can please himself; and while one watches the Alpine glow from the Schänzli, another will descend into the cellar of the old corn-house or granary, which is not without a certain poetry of its own, though of a different kind. It stands on the site formerly occupied by the ditch in which the zoological collection used to be kept, and contains many a row of grand old casks, all filled with noble wine. Take but a draught of this generous beverage, and you will instantly see everything through rose-coloured spectacles, and even the 'Black District' of gray old Bern will seem to be suffused with an Alpine glow. It should be remarked that the town

is divided into five districts, which are called Yellow, White, Green, Red, and Black respectively, according to the colour of the numbers on the houses. In each of these there is a perfect labyrinth of streets and alleys, all more or less interesting and picturesque, though their nomenclature is so exceedingly curious that one is often puzzled to attach any meaning to the names by which they are known.

But Bern contains a good many other antiquities, besides its streets, which are well worthy of notice. Chief among these is the Rathhaus, or town-hall, a truly ancient, but stumpy and heavy-looking building, something like a castle, which formerly regulated all the thoughts and opinions of the town. The staircase, sculptures, rooms, and some of the pictures recall to our minds the date at which it was founded, namely, about the year 1416. Till 1798 its vaults contained considerable treasure belonging to the State; but this was soon smelt out by the Corsican robber, who wanted it, and indeed used it, for his wild expedition into Egypt. Everything that was not clinched and riveted in its place was carried off to Paris; and even the poor bears, the town's living badges, shared the same fate. These latter were transported to the Jardin des Plantes, where they led a melancholy existence, mocked and jeered at by everybody. According to one account their miserable state of exile was soon ended by death; but according to another, they became extremely popular and were treated with great honour, and this is said to have been especially the case with one named 'Martin,' whose descent could be traced in a direct line from the pair of bears presented to the town of Bern in the fif-



SMITHY OF LANGNAU, IN THE EMMENTAL.

teenth century by the fugitive René, Duke of Lorraine. The bears' pit or ditch was left as empty and desolate as the Rathhaus treasury; spiders adorned it with their webs, and the walls resounded with the derisive laughter of the French. A certain French employé, seeing one of the townswomen look sadly into the deserted bear-garden one day, is said to have had the insolent audacity to beg her 'not to grieve over the loss of her pets, as there were plenty of bears still left in her beloved Bern!'

The woman gave him a pretty sharp answer for his impudence, however, saying, 'Nay, sir, no bears, but a good many wild beasts of other kinds!' and the shot went straight to the mark. The Frenchman appreciated its meaning perfectly, and turned away, muttering, '*Citoyenne*, it is fortu-

nate for you that you are not a man.'

There are innumerable walks, drives, and excursions to be made in the neighbourhood, and it is difficult to choose between them; but artists would perhaps prefer going to Burgdorf, called on the French side Berthoud, probably after the founder Berchtold, the same who built Bern. By the lower orders it is generally called Burtlef. This little town, which is situated on the Emme, is a miniature Bern, built in the same style, with similar arcades and colonnades, and inhabited by a similar class of people. It is very flourishing, and its storehouses are filled with such articles as delight the heart of the Swiss housewife, namely, flax, yarn, honey, butter, cheese, and linen from the fertile valley of Emmenthal close by.

CHAPTER XIII. THE BÖDELI.

WHAT is this 'Bödeli'? It sounds very simple and innocent, and not particularly promising; and yet it is very important ground, as we are reminded by the mention of Interlaken. Then the Bödeli is Interlaken? No, not that; but Interlaken is situated in the midst of the Bödeli, the district, namely, which forms the threshold and entrance of the great theatre towards which we have so long looked with longing eyes, and at which we last gazed from the Cathedral Terrace in Bern. This theatre is the Bernese Oberland, and many thousands go hence every year to secure their places in the stalls or in the boxes in the first, second, and third tiers, nearly all of which are reserved for foreigners. Then Interlaken is in the Oberland? Yes, and no. It is not in the

actual Oberland, meaning by that the Swiss Highlands, which still look down upon us from a considerable distance; indeed, the Interlaken public are nearly eleven miles away from the Jungfrau, who must be regarded as undisputed *prima donna* of the Bernese Alps.

The whole region is enclosed within a huge moat, formed on one side by the Aar and the lakes of Brienz and Thun, on the other by the Kander and Dala, and on the south by the Rhône. This mighty intrenchment has only two breaks in it, the one in the east being formed by the Grimsel, that in the west by the Gemmi, the two well-known passes which lead down into Valais.

Within this mountain-island rise the High Alps in two parallel chains, of which the southern one

belongs to Valais and the northern to the canton of Bern.

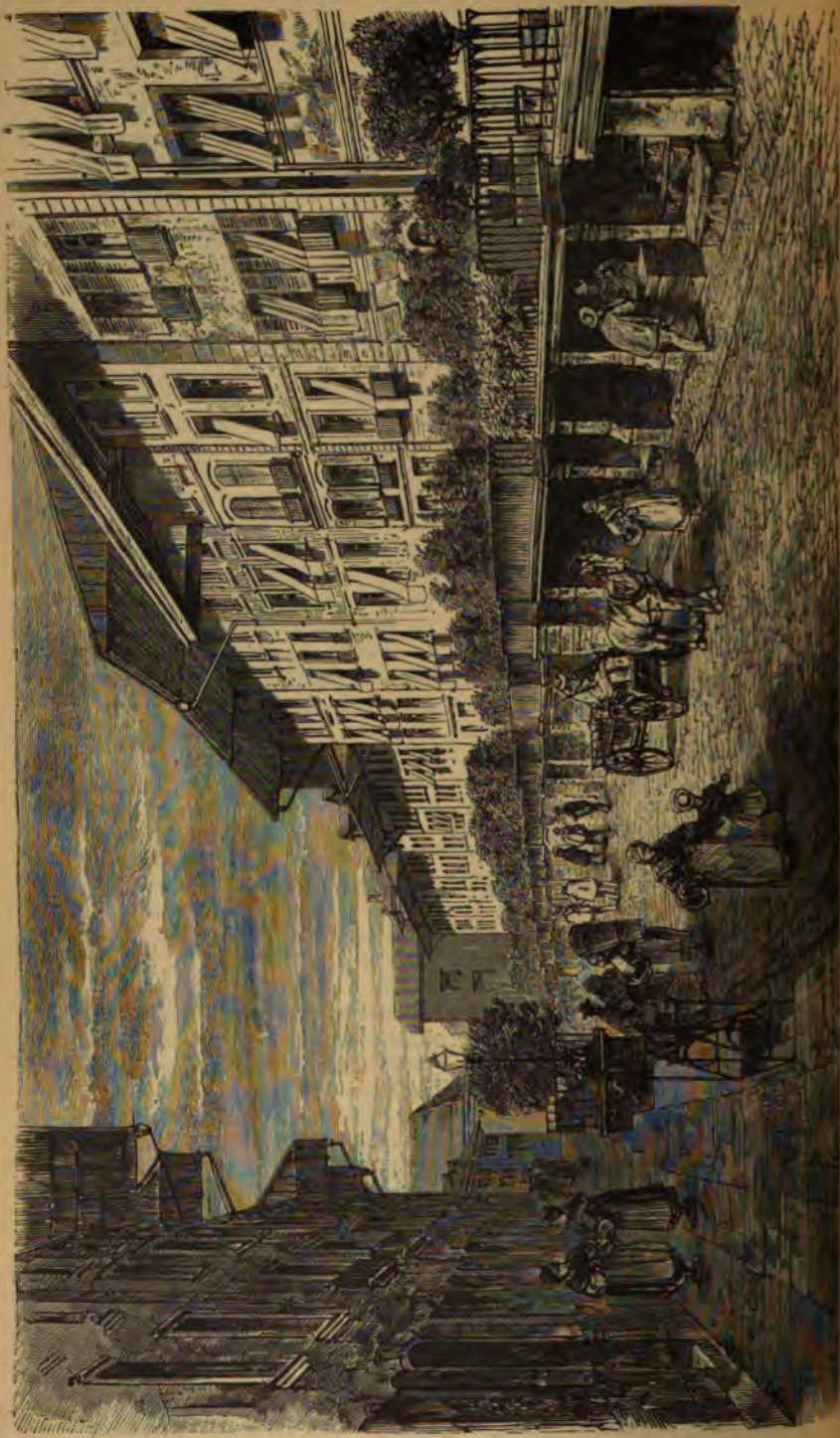
The two chains meet and culminate in the Finsteraarhorn, which overtops all the other peaks, even the most lofty, and rears his head some fourteen thousand odd feet above the sea-level.

Numerous lesser heights stand in front of this row of Titans, and extend up to the lakes and even beyond them. Such are the Morgen and Abendberg, the Faulhorn, Schwarzhorn, and Burghorn, and, to the west of Thun, the Scheibe and Stockhorn. These belong to the various chains known as the Voralps, from which the High Alps are separated by the pass of the Scheidegg, which runs from east to west.

The range of the ordinary tourist and excursionist who goes about in dainty toilet, with a dainty alpenstock in his hand, extends from the shores of the lakes of Thun and Brienz to the Schilt-horn and Scheidegg, a district which is always swarming with visitors, and is the favourite resort of newly-married couples; but it is after we have passed through this that the real work begins, and we come to the region which needs the tough muscles and nimble foot of the chamois, and taxes all the powers of the Alpine traveller. The army which annually besieges the Alps moves on in three divisions, each of which has its own head-quarters, whence some make merry expeditions and walking tours in the company of their families, and others set out alone to attack the Alps in a more serious fashion. The right wing of the army halts at Meiringen or Brienz, on its way up the Haslithal and to the Grimsel; the left chooses Thun, whence it proceeds past the river Kander to the valley of Engstligenthal, or by way of Kandersteg to

the Gemmi Pass. Between these two, and exactly between the two lakes which connect and keep up communication between one wing and the other, lies the Böödeli with Interlaken, which is the grand head-quarters of the third division. Interlaken lies at the entrance of that especially favourite valley, the Lauterbrunnenthal; and the number of delightful excursions which may be made from thence is simply unlimited. Moreover, they have the recommendation of being within easy reach, none of the expeditions in the valley occupying more than a day each. Those usually made are to the far-famed waterfalls of the Staubbach, Trümletenbach, Schmadribach, to the grand Wengernalp, to Mürren, Grindelwald, and to the Faulhorn, which is a sort of Bernese Rigi. Interlaken itself possesses many charms and attractions, though Bädeler thinks it necessary to qualify his praises by remarking: 'Interlaken is a good halting-place for such as are not obliged to economise their time and money, and they will find it pleasant to take a few days' rest here between their expeditions to the valleys and heights of the Oberland.'

Every one who has been to Interlaken knows the Höhweg, which is as famous as the Boulevards of Paris and our own Hyde Park, though it is not like either, and possesses a peculiar charm of its own. Fashionable loungers in the most brilliant toilets may be seen disporting themselves in the pleasant green shade, having on the one side a row of palace-like hotels with blooming gardens, fountains, and shrubberies, and all the tokens of luxury; and on the other, the soft green meadows which stretch up to the mouth of the valley of Lauterbrunnen, while behind them rises the glistening



form of the Jungfrau. On the one hand there are the intoxicating strains of Strauss, Beethoven, Gounod, and Mozart played by the band, and on the other there is the soft tinkle of the herd-bells and the lowing of the cattle. Yonder is the hotel omnibus, filled to overflowing with passengers, and piled high with luggage; and close by are elegant carriages and cabriolets, side by side perhaps with a heavy harvest wagon or some primitive village conveyance filled with women and girls in the charming Bernese costume.

Though Interlaken is a town, a large and distinguished town too, it is also a pastoral village, much given to keeping cows and geese. The mode of life there much resembles that of Baden-Baden, but the air is that of the Bernese Oberland, and the prices paid show the high value put upon it.

The climate of Interlaken is considered very beneficial to invalids, being warm and damp, and it early acquired some reputation on this account, though it did not reach its highest fame until the latter half of the present century. Guide-books of fifty years ago spoke of Herr Seiler's establishment as almost the only place in Interlaken where a lodging could be obtained, whereas now it is almost as hopeless to try and give a list of the hotels and *pensions* as it would be to count the visitors who flock hither from every part of Europe as though they were under some magnetic influence, and spend a longer or shorter time here, trying what the delights of summer and the pure air will do towards restoring their health. Fashion no doubt has a great share in making the place so popular; but we may reckon that, in a good season, nearly forty thousand foreigners pass through Interlaken.

Nature is always the same; and though an impertinent hotel for the million, called the Jungfraueblick, has been built by puny mortals before her very face, she smiles serenely down upon it, well aware that in spite of all they may do her charms can never be destroyed.

Perhaps there is no place in which we may more thoroughly enjoy these charms than in the lovely little Bodeli village of Bönigen. There is something idyllic about it, as it lies among the orchards on the shore of the lake; and we feel as if we really were in the Bernese Oberland, such as we imagined it before we came hither. There is something extremely homelike in the aspect both of the landscape and the houses, something, too, which makes us at once feel at home. The flower-gardens are surrounded by new plantings of fir-wood, and the little beds are almost too neatly and symmetrically arranged to accord with the air of freedom which pervades the rest of the scene. The bee-house, with its protecting roof, looks out upon the meadow, which is gay with a thousand buds and blossoms; fowls and pigeons are hopping and flying backwards and forwards, from the huge dunghill and the patch of nettles in the corner to the dwelling-house, with its high shingle roof. The windows in the gable open into a gallery of open trellis-work which is gay with pinks and roses, and quite conceals the bedrooms from view. The lower part of the house is filled with numerous windows; leaving room, however, for the face of a sundial.

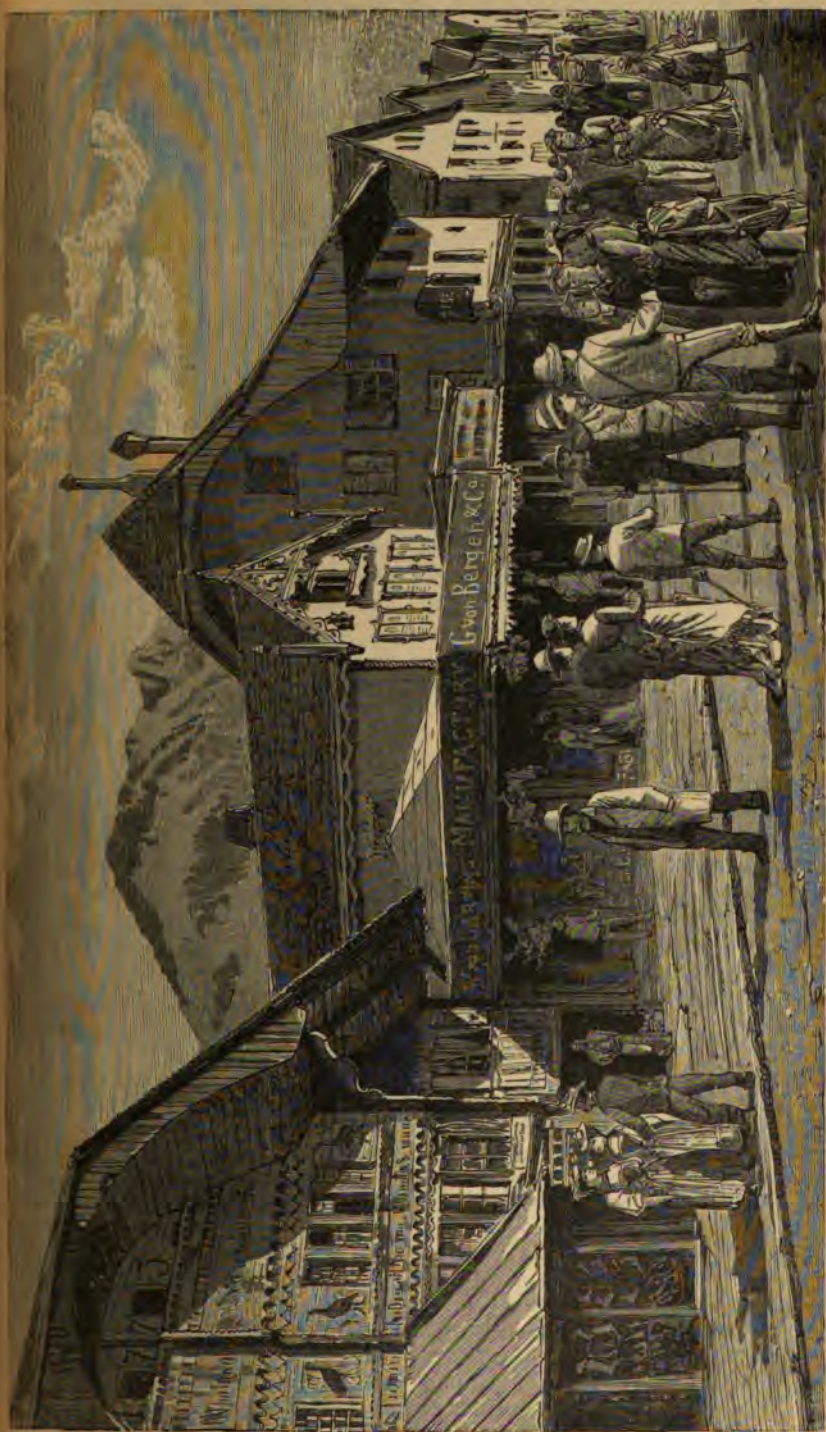
At the entrance stands a bench, and above it waves a quantity of linen hung out from the gallery to dry, the house-door being almost entirely concealed by wash-tubs,

buckets, and milk-pails. Close by the house runs a spring of water, which is always flowing with a pleasant, cheerful, gurgling sound, mingled with the lowing of the cows, the humming and buzzing of insects, the scent of the hay, grass, fruit, and flowers in garden and meadows—the whole forming such a *tout ensemble* as can hardly be realised without personal experience. Add to all this the cheerful faces of the handsome inhabitants, the laughter of children, the summer visitors, and the long wreaths of smoke emitted by the steamers on the lake, and you have as good an idea of Bönigen as can be conveyed on paper. Yet it must not be supposed for a moment that we may lay aside our pilgrim's staff and take our ease in this earthly Paradise; there is far too much to be seen in the neighbourhood for that to be possible. Indeed, we are beckoned in all directions, and the names of Heimwehfluh, little Bugen, Bleiki, Harder, and Unspunnen, the latter an old ruined castle in the depths of a wood, fill us with eager longings and desires. But there are plenty of longer excursions quite within our reach, and in front of each hotel there are sure to be carriages waiting, besides strong mountain-ponies and guides, who are always ready to offer their services. Railway and steamboat will convey us without the least trouble to the pretty neighbouring town of Thun, which has been struggling and striving for years past to rival Interlaken. Leaving the carriage, from which we have enjoyed such glorious views, at Därligen, on the southern shore of the Lake of Thun, we next have a delightful trip over the water in the steamboat. It has often been a matter of discussion whether the palm of beauty should be given to the

Lake of Brienz or the Lake of Thun, and the question yet remains an open one, for both are lovely. The Lake of Brienz, however, has hitherto had more assiduous court paid to it by speculators, and its attractions have been more loudly proclaimed, while the shores of the Lake of Thun have been more sought by persons of a poetical temperament. Both are genuine Swiss pearls, differing perhaps in colour, but of equal value in the eyes of the connoisseur.

The Lake of Thun, or *Lacus Dunensis*, called the Wendelsee in mediæval times, takes its present name from the town of Thun at its western extremity, which is said to be of ancient Keltic origin, *Dunum* signifying 'hill.' Whether the name of Wendelsee be derived from the Vandals is more than doubtful, and it seems more probable that it comes either from the sudden bend (*Wendung* in German) which the lake is forced to make by a promontory of Mount Beatus called the Nose, which juts out some way into the water, or from the precipitous walls (*Wände*) by which it is enclosed. The wind about the little promontory is often dangerous to the boatman, and the uncouth forbidding names given to it and to the cave known as *der böse Rath*, or Evil Counsel, neither of which sounds pleasant, might give a false impression of the lake and its shores, which possess all the charm and almost the luxuriant beauty of the lakes of North Italy. Almost every little cottage-garden in Oberhofen boasts its laurel-bushes; the chestnut flourishes to perfection; and, in exceptionally warm summers, the vines on the eastern and western slopes of the lake produce grapes from which something like drinkable wine is made.

The shores of the lake do cer-



A STREET IN INTERLAKEN.

tainly possess something of the brightness and cheerfulness which one is accustomed to associate with a wine country; and the white towns and villages, such as Thun, Spiez, Leissigen, Aeschi, Gwatt, Schadau, Merligen, Oberhofen, Sigriswyl, and Beatenberg, which dot its borders, are all gay and pleasant-looking.

If, as people say, civilisation moves from east to west, it seems probable, since speculation is sure to move hand in hand with it, that the Lake of Thun will one day be as busy as the Lake of Brienz, and that the town of Thun will become a second Interlaken. Everything, in fact, seems to promise this result, for the townspeople are very active and public-spirited, and there is a great deal of building, enlarging, and beautifying going on in the outskirts. In former days, when it was a small petty place, Herr Hartmann von Habsburg - Kyburg mortgaged it to Bern for 20,000 florins; but those times are quite over, and now every foot of ground is valuable.

The architecture of Thun is of a striking and picturesque character; though, as nineteenth-century ideas are in favour of plenty of light and air, the broad-eaved roofs have been long since swept away. Still, it is surprising to see that the mediæval and modern styles of building harmonise so well together, that there is nothing incongruous in the turreted castle which rises above the town, nor in the little sharp-pointed towers which are dotted about everywhere, nor in the ancient-looking arcades which run along the front of the houses. Thun has, moreover, been more liberally dealt with by Nature than most towns. What with lake, river, hill, mountains, scenery around, distant prospects, climate, and fertility of

the soil, the *tout ensemble* may be regarded as entirely charming; and Humboldt must have considered it perfect, for he called it the most lovely spot in Switzerland.

The little town has been growing more and more popular for some years past, and in the summer-time it is thronged with tourists, who find much to delight them in the immediate neighbourhood, provided they be not too soon enticed away by the snow-capped mountains which look down into all its streets.

You may explore the lake in a hurried sort of way by means of the steamboat; but if you would really appreciate its beauties, it is better either to hire a boat or to make a walking tour round it. A good many people think that when they have visited Schadau they have exhausted all that is to be seen; and certainly Schadau is wondrously beautiful, for Art and Nature have combined to do their utmost for it. It stands on a tongue of land on the left bank of the river Aar, just where the river rushes out of the lake; and even in old times the view of river, lake, and mountains must needs have possessed many attractions. Schadau has been the seat of several noble families in succession. The Von Strätlingen, Von Bubenbergh, Von Erlach, Von Scharnachthal, have all resided here, and the present owner is M. de Rougemont-Pourtales, who has made his pet residence into as perfect a place as possible. The grand cheerful-looking château is surrounded by flowers, trees, mountains, and the flashing sparkling waters of lake and river; but, beautiful as it undoubtedly is, we have not exhausted all the charms of the Lake of Thun when we have seen it.

And now we must return to the



CHATEAU OF SCHADAU.

Lake of Brienz. There are a good many points of resemblance between the Lake of Brienz and that of Walensee, both as regards its position, the nature of the shores which enclose it, and the features of the surrounding landscape. But the Lake of Brienz is, on the whole, of a wilder sterner character, and those who prefer scenery of a soft and smiling aspect must go to the neighbouring Lake of Thun.

Nevertheless, the fir-wood on the southern shore boasts one pearl of world-wide notoriety, which would of itself be quite enough to insure the Lake of Brienz a good measure of honour and consideration. Crossing over from the pleasant town of Brienz in a rowing-boat or the steamer, we see a wild mountain-torrent leaping over the rocks, and surrounded by the loveliest verdure; but, if we did not know that it was called the Giessbach, it would probably not attract our attention in any great degree, as we have seen a good many much finer waterfalls. The splendid hotel built on the height above, and called the Giessbach Hotel, in honour of the cascade, is striking enough, and is known and visited by nearly all the civilised nations of the earth. The Giessbach enjoys a world-wide reputation, and all through the summer people stream hither as if to an International Exhibition, merely to see and admire the feats of this most daring of acrobats. As many as sixty or eighty thousand visitors come every year. But, even apart from the vivacious torrent which adds so much life and beauty to the scene, the environs of the hotel are well worth a visit. The lovely glen of Wiesenthal with its nut-trees, the beloved seclusion of the dark fir-woods, which are fragrant with

delicious odours and melodious with the song of birds, the moss-covered blocks of stone strewn all around, the sunny hills and bright flowers, the view of the two lakes sparkling below and the menacing-looking precipices opposite, the luxurious comfort of this the best of all hotels, and the gay parties of people whom one encounters in the wood and on the terrace,—all these things combine to make this a very delightful resting-place; and then, in addition, we have the beauty of the cascade and the sound of its falling waters, which soothes us like soft distant fairy music, and leads us into the golden dreamland of peace even in our waking hours.

The Giessbach is a thoroughly vigorous torrent, and where there is vigour there is health and attachment to life. It is only human beings who are so morbid as to drag their miseries about with them wherever they go, thus destroying, at least so far as they themselves are concerned, all the beautiful harmony and perfection of Nature. Such a place as this is like Paradise restored; but most people enter it with a sigh, or some such melancholy reflection as is embodied in the following well-known lines of Burns:

'Pleasures are like poppies spread—
You seize the flower, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow-falls in the river—
A moment white, then melt for ever;

Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;
Or like the rainbow's lovely form,
Evanishing amid the storm.'

But from the terrace yonder comes the sound of children's voices, and the clear ringing laughter of girls; and sounds of mirth also reach us from the winding paths in the forest. Do these merry hearts belong to natives of England, France, Germany, or Russia? Laughter is independent of na-

tionality, and is, as generally understood as the song of the birds and the universal language of Nature. But unhappily we are inclined to forget this language only too soon, and the accents of joy seem to our withered hearts like some sorrowful echo of the past; and the beauty of Nature fills us with sadness, because we no longer understand her.

Thousands and thousands no doubt come to the Giessbach, who have entirely forgotten the old tongue; they glance at it in a cold, dull, lifeless sort of way, looking so cross all the time that they make one inclined to laugh at them — and yet, do not let us laugh, for they have come, poor things, to try and heal their souls at the fountain of beauty, just as those who suffer from bodily disease have recourse to medicinal springs.

But the torrent, which lives and flows only for itself, and is perfectly indifferent alike to sighs and admiration, pursues its wonted course without the slightest deviation.

The cradle of the Giessbach stands high up behind the Faulhorn, in the midst of the blue glacier of the Schwarzhorn; thence it takes its first bold leap down the steep precipice to the Tschingelfeld, and after two more descents it falls in with the companion streams which rush down

from the Faulhorn and the Battenalp. Then follow a fresh plunge and a furious struggle in the narrow rocky gorge of the Bottenklemme, which would have swallowed the torrent up altogether at one time if human hands had not come to the rescue and filled up the yawning gulf. After this



UPPER FALL OF THE GIESSBACH.

follows a short period of repose, while it makes its way quietly through the peaceful valley of Wiesenthal; and then it stands, startled and hesitating, on the edge of the mountain, which towers some eleven hundred feet

above the lake, into which it at last precipitates itself by a succession of giant strides, fourteen in number, which bring its gay career to a close.

For many hundred years it remained unnoticed in the depths of the forest, and its nearest neighbour, the Reichenbach, was famous long before the Giessbach attracted any attention at all—indeed, it was not till 1820 that a path was opened up through the wilderness of fir-trees and carried on as far as the tenth cascade. This was done by a schoolmaster named Kehrli, who was a great lover of Nature, and his work was taken up and carried on by Pastor Wiss of Brienz and the family of the Von Rappard; by them the beauty of the Giessbach was at last brought to light, and it soon proved to be another source of gain to the neighbourhood.

A few years ago, when the traveller made his way up to the falls, he found nothing but one homely little cottage, belonging to Kehrli the schoolmaster, who saluted him on his arrival with a concert of native airs, sung by the fresh well-trained voices of his children. There was very scanty accommodation for visitors in those days, and not much comfort. Now people come by steamboat, and are saluted on their arrival and departure by a few female singers from the village, who assemble in the waiting-room and *jodel* away with their worn-out voices in a very feeble manner. Like many other things in the Bernese Oberland, the whole performance is got up solely with a view to money-making. But when we reach the hotel on the height above we encounter an individual who is entitled to our deepest respect, the Moltke of all hotel-keepers, whose praises are trumpeted forth in loud tones by

everybody, no matter how exhausted he may be by admiration of the Giessbach. If the Giessbach be a model first-class waterfall, the Giessbach Hotel is certainly a model first-class hotel.

As we pass by Brienz, with its hospitable lights, it looks so inviting that we determine to see it and its tranquil lake by daylight; and the next morning accordingly we take a boat, and, steered by the hand of some sturdy maiden or skilful boatman, we glide pleasantly through the clear blue heavens which smile at us from the water, and contemplate the village quite at our ease.

Brienz possesses the charm of a mild climate, thanks to its being entirely sheltered from the rough north and north-east winds; and not only do fig-trees and laurels pass the winter in the open air without being any the worse, but human beings also enjoy almost uninterrupted health. Accordingly, in front of all the houses, which are built close down to the water's edge, we find flourishing gardens, and fruit-trees grow most luxuriantly high up the grassy slopes which rise above the village, under the shelter of the sacred forest of Wang.

The name of Lauterbrunnen is given to that valley which, traversed by the rapid White Lüt-schine, is adorned right and left by some twenty clear silvery cascades. The beautiful Staubbach ranks first both in fame and loveliness; but the Lauibach, Sautbach, Fluhbach, Mürrenbach, and Sesilütschenenbach on the right of the valley, and the Wengenbach, Schiltwaldbach, Trümletenbach, Mattenbach, and Staldenbach on the left, which enliven the upper valley chiefly, all claim some attention. The valley is very contracted, being nowhere so



BLOWING THE ALPHORN.

much as a mile in width, and it winds along between steep precipices of rock which are so lofty as seldom to allow us a glimpse of the Jungfrau, though we are drawing nearer and nearer to her. Most of the visitors who come hither in swarms on fine days go no farther up the valley than the Staubbach, which is close to the village of Lauterbrunnen. The

inhabitants of this place lead a most forlorn isolated existence at all other times of the year, and are eagerly on the watch to make what gain they can out of the tourists whom the summer brings them. This, in fact, is the usual halting-place, and the spot whence the fall is seen to the best advantage is always occupied by spectators. The scenery around is

certainly grand and striking, but many people experience a feeling of disappointment when first they come within full view of the Staubbach. Generally speaking, it cannot be said that there is any grandeur about it, but the phenomenon is a lovely one even in the height of summer, when the nymph who presides over the destinies of the torrent sends forth but a small quantity of water from her urn. After a severe storm the fall presents a very different aspect; being very much increased in size and changed to a dark gloomy colour, the volume of water which then comes thundering down the precipice is really a grand sight; indeed, the torrent which now looks like a silvery cloud, waving to and fro with every breath of wind, has in times gone by done a great deal of damage in the valley below.

Opposite the Staubbach, but still unapproachable, stands the Jungfrau, unchangeable as ever in her sublime repose. A great deal has been written and printed about the Staubbach, but it is of too nervous and restless temperament to be photographed.

The finest description of it, both in prose and verse, is unquestionably that of our own Byron :

'It is not noon—the sunbow's rays still
arch
The torrent with the many hues of hea-
ven,
And roll the sheeted silver's waving
column
O'er the crags headlong perpendicular,
And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser's
tail,
The giant steed to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse.'

Many other poets have written the usual commonplaces about the 'nymph with silver locks, robed in sunlight, and glorified with the resplendent colours of the iris,' but with these we need not now concern ourselves. Sometimes, when she finds the crowd

down below too troublesome, the nymph will indulge in a practical joke, and shake the bright drops from her silver locks right in the faces of the assembled tourists, just as the menagerie lion will get up and shake his mane at the spectators who press too close up to the bars of his cage.

But worse than this occasional shower-bath is the constant persecution which the visitor has to endure at the hand of lace-makers and lace-sellers. The pilgrims to the Staubbach are pursued by boxes full of lace, and tenders are made in all the languages of Europe. The poor lace-makers work hard all the winter to produce this supply; but, though children begin to take their share in it at a very early age, it is extremely monotonous weary work. Those who have no lace to dispose of sell bits of coloured stone, carvings, photographs, alpenstocks, chamois horns, and fruit, though the valley itself is too cold to allow any fruit but cherries and a few kinds of berries to ripen. The population is said to be poor, for most of the pastures on the heights above belong to their neighbours, and agriculture is out of the question. Accordingly the people seem almost to have forgotten how to work, and employ themselves by doing a little fishing and a little wood-carving, acting as guides to visitors in the summer, and hunting chamois and birds of prey. They are said, however, to be extremely polite, and even more than this, intellectual; but the stranger does not see much of it, and what chiefly strikes him is generally the spirit of speculation, which is very rampant, and even tries to make capital out of the poetical sentiment which many tourists, those of the fair sex especially, are wont to bring with them to Switzerland. All

who come from the 'Heimwehfluh' of Interlaken are sure to have a great wish to see and hear the far-famed Alphorn, which is said to have such a wonderfully magic effect; and when their wish is gratified they will most likely close their eyes and ears, feeling that they have one sweet illusion the less in the world. This famous and undoubtedly finely-toned instrument requires a great deal of breath, and consequently great strength in the performer, who is perforce driven to illustrate the truth of the proverb, *Cantores amant humores*—the humor here being a good draught of Kirschwasser.

However, those who have watch-

ed the poor men at Rosenlaui, on the Faulhorn, at the Staubbach, and other places, often trying vainly to produce the notes, which seem to have been completely frozen by the bitter wind, must be hard-hearted indeed if they grudge them their favourite potation.

Heard at the right time and under the proper circumstances, however, the effect of the Alpine horn is quite different, and a few notes from the performer, who is almost ridiculous in our eyes to-day, will then stir our hearts with emotion.

'I hear an Alphorn yonder—
It calls me hence away.'

And so adieu to the Staubbach!



A PEASANT OF LAUTERBRUNNEN.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER XVII.

DREAMS OF GRANDEUR.

It was a fine morning, and having climbed on to the top of the accumulation of sticks and twigs which rose like a dome above the colony of the ants, I looked attentively about me.

How different did everything appear to me now! The wood was cheerfully lit up by the sunbeams; the ant-hill seen by daylight had lost the threatening aspect it had worn in the doubtful moonlight, and I could not help laughing at the recollection of my terrors and the gloomy reflections they had inspired. 'How our views of things change,' I said to myself, 'according to the circumstances in which we find ourselves, such as the time of day, whether we are hot or cold, tired or hungry, and so forth!' The ants I had so much dreaded were now swarming beneath me; the transportation of the pupæ and larvæ was going on uninterruptedly; the whole of that side of the ant-hill which faced

the east was alive with a teeming population working without one moment's cessation.

From the commanding position I occupied I could see the whole of the clearing, and the numerous paths leading from the colony and branching off in every direction towards the wood. These paths were already crowded with ants on their way to seek food.

As I stood thus looking down upon the animated scene, a few of the workers engaged in carrying the larvæ approached me, and politely begged me to give them a little music.

Have I already mentioned that my talents as a musician are of no ordinary description? If not, it is time that I did so. It will be remembered that one evening in my childhood I had been vividly impressed by the song of a nightingale. On my return home that night, after the terrible scene described at the beginning of this

narrative, a new passion possessed my soul, and my eager wish to acquire the talent I had heard exercised deprived me of the power of rest. Every spare moment was now devoted to practising an art

for which my taste was recognised. The isolation to which I was condemned by my brothers' prejudice against me to some extent favoured the cultivation of my pet study, and I soon acquired



considerable skill. I had not my equal in the execution of an arpeggio, and no one could shake better than I. I knew how to make a most effective pause; but it was in my mode of bringing out the final C that I was most entirely unsurpassed.

As I have just said, I was in-

vited to perform by some ants. I was the more disposed to gratify them as I had had no opportunity of indulging in my favourite pastime for the last few days. I made a sign that I was going to begin; and after a few rapid scales interspersed with an occasional sonorous shake, just to

show off the correctness of my ear, I struck up a sweet and melodious song—a kind of slow metopeia, calculated to throw my hearers into that peculiar state of nerveless languor from which a clever performer can so easily rouse his audience into noisy and eager enthusiasm. Presently, warming to my work by degrees, I indulged in a few brilliant flights. I performed the shrillest roulades, and my hurried notes, now deep, now high, resounded to the very borders of the clearing, and awoke the echoes of the usually silent wood.

The ants, pausing in their work, gradually gathered round me; parties on the eve of starting on expeditions paused to listen, and then retraced their steps; whilst those still indoors, hearing the unusual sounds, rushed out from every gallery to ascertain their cause. In a few moments I was surrounded by a vast crowd. The butterflies, flies, and bees which were collecting food in the neighbourhood, seeing from the distance the huge assemblage of which I was the centre, came to hover above me, and ascertain what it was which had caused so much excitement amongst the ants, generally so orderly and self-possessed.

My success was prodigious. I had the sense, however, to stop in time, and not to risk lessening the enthusiasm I had aroused by too sustained an effort. At the end, therefore, of a more triumphant shake than ever, I brought out my final C, and paused in such a manner as to bring out all its beauty. With this a perfect frenzy seemed to possess the ants. They all rushed upon me at once, climbing one upon the other, and in a few minutes I was covered with them; whilst others, slipping under my feet, literally raised me

from the ground. My only regret was that the spider was not there to witness my triumph.

It was evident that I might now hope to take a very good position amongst the ants. I might settle finally in their colony as ordinary and extraordinary musician to the republic, and lead an easy life. The prospect of a series of such ovations as that of which I had just been the object was far from disagreeable to me. I was sure of being well taken care of, well fed, and of being crammed with sugar every day. A music-loving people, able to appreciate talent, such as the ants had just proved themselves to be, could do no less, for the sake of retaining amongst them an artist whose claims to respect had just been proved with so much *éclat*. And who could tell but that some day the ants might tire of the republican form of government?

And why not? I should make as good a king any day as one of themselves—better, in fact, for I had one undeniable advantage over them in my size, my dignity, in a word, in a certain distinguished air wanting to any of them. I was of another race, other blood than theirs flowed in my veins, an advantage not to be despised, as all the world knows. And then, best reason of all, I could amuse them! True, my knowledge of politics, of government, of war, was not very extensive, but how should they know that? That was my business, and I need not proclaim it on the house-tops. I had but to keep silence in council and to shake my head now and then, which would give me at once the appearance of a profound, thoughtful, and prudent cricket. As for war, the ants could take to fighting when they liked; there was no need for me to figure as a hero in the field of battle.

There are many ways of being great, and I should shine best in peace. Ha, ha! friend spider! you will be finely surprised to find me king of the ants some day! And my relations, my unworthy brothers—how easy it would be to revenge myself upon them, to make them bitterly rue their misdeeds! But no, far be it from me to harbour a thought so unworthy to my character! I would content myself with going to seek them accompanied by an imposing escort; I would collect them round me, tell them of the exalted position to which I had been raised by my own merits alone, reproach them for the injuries they had done me, and then pardon them. Is not the magnanimity of the powerful the noblest, the most beautiful, and the rarest of virtues?

After having thanked the ants for the flattering manifestations of which I had been the object, I begged them to resume their interrupted occupations, and as I made them a dignified bow of farewell it seemed to me as if I were already in the position I might some day be called upon to fill.

Those who read these memoirs may perhaps set me down as ambitious. But let any such imagine themselves in my place. Let them point out to me any one who would not be intoxicated by public applause, and who could retain his calmness of judgment in the thick of an ovation from an excited crowd.

Gradually the ants retired, and I was left alone. I thought I would take a stroll in the clearing, which was just the place for a walk, as the soil was dry, and there were only a few stunted plants growing here and there.

I reached the borders of the wood without difficulty, but I contented myself with skirting round it without entering it. Now

and then I crossed a path alive with ants, and paused a moment to watch them going and coming, now exchanging a few words with each other, now hurrying on again with a busy air, some carrying loads, others dragging along some object too heavy to be lifted.

In this walk I noticed one thing which interested me deeply.

Rounding a bush, my sense of smell—I mean my antennæ, since, according to Meg, we smell with them—was disagreeably affected by a putrid odour puffed into my face by the wind. I soon ascertained where the fœtid effluvium came from. Near me lay the corpse of a field-mouse, the decomposition of which was being greatly accelerated by the heat. I was about to make a détour to avoid the unpleasant smell, when the body of the little creature seemed to move. I stopped in astonishment, thinking I must be the dupe of a delusion; but no, it moved again. I was certainly not mistaken. There could be no doubt that it was dead, that the disagreeable odour proceeded from it. Yet it moved!

Whilst I was carefully examining it, trying to find the key to the mystery, I saw issue from beneath it a good-sized black beetle with two bands of bright reddish-orange colour on its back and with yellow-tipped antennæ.

‘Bother,’ he observed, as if speaking to some one I could not see; ‘we two can never manage it alone; let’s go for help.’

‘Do you imagine,’ answered a voice which seemed to come from beneath the corpse, ‘that we shall find friends in the neighbourhood?’

‘Wait for me,’ was the reply; ‘I’ll go and see.’

‘But,’ remonstrated the other, ‘suppose the body should be stolen in your absence?’

‘Never you fear, friend; it’s

broad daylight. Carrion-crows are the only creatures likely to play us such a trick, and I don't see any about.'

'Go, then,' answered the voice from underground, 'and come back as quickly as you can.'

With that the beetle I had seen spread his wings, and turning his back on the clearing, flew over the coppice.

This fragment of conversation puzzled me greatly. I went round the mouse, so as to get to windward, and avoid the unpleasant odour, and as I did so a second beetle, just like the first, came out from beneath it.

He did not at first notice me, so busy was he examining the corpse. He climbed upon it and ran along just as if he were measuring its length. Then he growled between his teeth, 'Bother, it will be very hard work; let's hope he'll meet some friends. Unless seven or eight of us attack it, we shall never get done. But what a windfall for our children! It'll be hard work, though.' Here he noticed me, and after giving me a good stare without speaking he slid back to the ground, and squatted down upon it, as if waiting for his companion.

I was most anxious to know what these two insects were plotting in connection with the dead body, which they were so afraid of having stolen from them. Why had one of them gone for help, and what kind of service did they hope to receive from their friends? If they meant to eat the mouse I could well understand their saying, 'We two can never manage it alone; let's go for help.' But then why did the other murmur, 'What a windfall for our children'? I was altogether at a loss. The simplest mode to get the explanation I wanted was to ask for it. This I did.

'You are expecting friends,' I began; 'if I heard rightly just now, your friend is gone to issue invitations for dinner.'

'That is my husband,' answered the beetle, 'and I hope he will meet plenty of our friends. A dozen will not be too many for the work we have to do.'

'You are speaking of the banquet you are going to offer them. But your mouse does not seem to me quite—what shall I say!—fresh. Is it?'

'You are all wrong, cricket; we have not the slightest intention of eating this mouse.'

'O, I beg your pardon; I thought I understood that you had. It is a little high.'

'Wrong again. Though we don't mean to eat it ourselves, we shall keep it for our children.'

'I am more at a loss than ever,' I observed; 'pray explain yourself.'

'Well, then, I am going to lay my eggs in this corpse, and from my eggs will proceed larvæ which will feed upon it.'

'Ah, indeed! Well, you must excuse my saying that your children's meat will be high enough by that time.'

'They will like it.'

'Will they really? Quite a matter of taste. But what have your friends to do with it all?'

'They will help us to bury this body.'

'What?'

'I say they will help us to bury this body. You will readily understand that I shan't leave it on the ground like this, for the first crow who happens to pass to devour it. If I did, there would be an end to my little family.'

'I am curious to see how you will set about the burial.'

'Well, your curiosity will be gratified directly, for there comes my husband with several friends.'

'Excuse me, just one other question.'

'Well, proceed.'

'What is your name?'

'Necrophorus.'

'Thank you.'

The necrophorus who had gone to look for friends had now returned, accompanied by a dozen comrades, who alighted round the body of the mouse. They were evidently aware of the nature of the service expected from them, for without a word they slid beneath the corpse, whilst I remained alone, eagerly watching for the operation I had been warned to expect.

The necrophori had no sooner disappeared under the mouse's body before the latter began to oscillate perceptibly, whilst at the same time a rampart of loose

earth, gradually increasing in size, was formed around it.

As the rampart grew in height and breadth the mouse gradually sank, and I guessed that the necrophori had undermined the ground beneath it by throwing out the earth on which it rested. Presently the corpse had sunk low enough for the rampart of loose earth to rise above it, and this rampart then began gradually to fall in upon it. The necrophori worked on without a moment's cessation, and the actual interment began.

I watched the operation with intense interest. Gradually the body sank, gradually the earth rolled down upon it, until at last it disappeared entirely. It was completely and skilfully buried.



CHAPTER XVIII.

AN IMPERTINENT FELLOW.

THE afternoon was spent in strolling about and examining all manner of things. In one place, where the soil was very sandy, I saw some round holes, which seemed very deep. I was wondering what they could be, when I saw a round flat head, armed with great bent and sharply-pointed mandibles, appear at the opening of one of them. This head was exactly the same size as the opening, which it completely closed; and, thanks to this and to its yellowish colour, it was scarcely distinguishable from its surroundings. This strange head stared at me.

'Who are you,' I inquired, 'and what are you doing there?'

'I am lying in wait for ants,' was the reply; 'I am the larva of a cicendela beetle.'

'What,' I exclaimed, 'the larva of a pretty green tiger-beetle, spotted with white, which runs very rapidly?'

'Just so.'

'And this is how you catch ants? You lie in ambush, and when they pass your way you spring upon them.'

'Not a bit of it; my legs are much too short for jumping. I never leave my hole.'

'How do you manage, then?'

'I wait until an ant runs on to my head; then I suddenly let myself sink down; the ant loses its balance, and falls into my pit. Then I seize it, and devour it at my ease.'

'You might have to wait a long time; and if you have no other means of subsistence, you must lead a dull life.'

'Not so dull as you would suppose. It's true I don't get a meal every day; but what am I

to do? My legs are too short to catch ants in fair chase; and besides, my body is protected by no armour. If I were to venture out of my harbour of refuge, those confounded ants, who know me well, would soon tear me to pieces.'

'But I suppose it must be only by chance, and by a rare chance, that an ant happens to run over your head?'

'O, I have not set my trap at haphazard. It is now dug in the middle of one of the ants' paths. I get as many as I want on a sunny day. Look, there is one coming now. I'll wager it runs on to my head.'

The cicendela was right; the ant did run over his head, but for all that he let it escape.

'There,' he observed, 'didn't I tell you so?'

'Why, you might have caught it,' I replied.

'Of course I might; but I've had plenty to eat to-day. When I spoke of fasting, I should have added that I do so only on wet days.'

'It doesn't matter either way,' I answered; 'anyhow, yours is but a tame existence.'

'Maybe; but I sha'n't pass my whole life in this hole, and the day will come when I shall be able to pursue the game for which I am now obliged to lie in wait.'

'Well,' I reflected, as I turned away, 'all creatures seem to console themselves for present ills by the hope of some other life. Yesterday it was the ant-lion, to-day it is the cicendela, and to-morrow it will be some one else, and so on.'

I had not gone ten steps when a new sight met my eyes.

At a little distance from me were two coleoptera, apparently of the scarabæi family, who were engaged in a task which seemed completely to absorb their attention, and to require all the strength of which they were possessed.

They were little creatures, about the size of my head, quite black, and almost round, only the last segment of their bodies tapered slightly. Their legs were long and curved, especially the hindermost pair.

When I first caught sight of them they were engaged—one pulling, the other pushing—in trying to get along a brownish ball, which seemed to me to be made of hardened earth. They were struggling to climb a pretty steep ruck, and the efforts they were making to get their load to the top were really marvellous. Again and again the ball slipped from their clutches and rolled back; but in spite of repeated failures they applied themselves to their task again with unabated courage.

Although I had not the slightest notion what they were driving at, I became interested in the success of their undertaking. When, therefore, I saw them at last pause to take breath, with the difficulty still unconquered, and then again set to work, encouraging each other by voice and gesture, I could no longer refrain from going to help them. Running up to them, I leant my head against the ball, and putting out all my strength, I quickly succeeded in getting on to the ridge they wanted to reach. All this took place so rapidly that it was not until the deed was done that I noticed something which would have damped my ardour had I known it a little sooner.

A very disagreeable odour, of a

nature not to be mistaken, proceeded from the ball.

My dislike to unpleasant odours, and my horror of touching anything from which they proceed, are well known. When, therefore, the beetles thanked me for my efficient help, I drew back a little, so as to get to windward of the object, and made a significant grimace.

At this the beetles, or rather, to give them their proper title, the silphas, looked at me and laughed.

‘What are you going to do with that ball? I inquired.

‘We have laid an egg in it,’ replied one, ‘and when it is hatched the young larva which will proceed from it will find itself in the midst of plenty of food. We take all this trouble for each one of our eggs. We spare no pains, as you perceive, to assure a comfortable life to our children. That’s the way with the whole of the beetle family.’

‘I can’t say much for the refinement of your offsprings’ taste,’ I replied.

‘That’s a point we need not discuss,’ replied the silpha. ‘It’s merely a matter of habit or education, and the odour repugnant to the olfactory sense of one is grateful to that of another. In acting as you have seen us do we perform an office necessary in the very order of things, that office being to remove and turn to account what has been left by others as superfluous or useless.’

‘All very plausible,’ I observed; ‘but that does not explain why you take such a deal of trouble to remove the ball a long distance off, when you might every bit as well leave it where you made it.’

‘What we mean to do,’ rejoined the beetle, ‘is to bury it in the hole you see down there. But for that precaution we might see it carried off by the first hungry

fellow who should happen to take a fancy to it.'

I thought of the necrophori I had lately seen, who had been working with a similar end in view; and I could not help laughing at the beetles' fear that their noisome pill would be stolen from them.

'Yours is but a sorry trade,' I observed.

'You think so, do you, cricket? Know then that the trade you so

much despise won the highest honours for our ancestors amongst men in olden times. There is a tradition current with us that a powerful ancient people numbered us amongst its gods. Now what do you say to that? I don't think I ever heard of a cricket being deified, eh, did you?

'No, I can't say I ever did; but what gained you such a signal honour?

'Well, I believe we were looked



upon as the emblem of the sun, the harbingers of the spring; in a word, the precursors of the renovation of all things. To our worshippers the ball we roll along was considered a type of the world, and the young beetle it contains a symbol of a being spontaneously generated by the forces of Nature, the embodiment of vital force.'

'All very pretty. But from what you say, I should not be a bit surprised if other human races

had worshipped crickets, only the tradition is lost; and do what I will, I can't honestly lay claim to any such noble origin.'

'Our origin,' replied the beetle, drawing itself up, 'is well known, and of undoubted authenticity. Do you know of any insects of a race as illustrious as ours?

Truth compelled me to own that I did not.

As I left the beetles I bowed solemnly to these descendants of gods.

'I don't envy their lot, for all that,' I said to myself. 'Whatever they may say about it, theirs is but a sorry trade. It may be that they were looked upon as gods in olden times, but now—ideas change as the world goes on. As for me, they remind me of the poor fellows who can only work at night.'

I had a good many more meetings in my walk, amongst others with a little mole who had tumbled on his back, and couldn't right himself because of the shortness of his legs. I was running to his assistance, when I saw him suddenly strike out, balance himself for a moment on the two extremities of his body, and then dropping himself down, as if he had let loose a spring, he struck the ground with the middle of his back, which sent him bounding into the air in a very funny fashion, and brought him down upon his feet. I was struck dumb with astonishment at this result, for never before had I seen such peculiar jumping.

A little further on a bombardier beetle attracted my attention. I did not then know the name of the pretty little creature, but learnt it afterwards. It was running before me, and resembled a carabus in general form, though it was smaller. Its body was red, and its elytra were deep blue. In its jaws it carried an ant which it had doubtless just put to death. In rounding a stone it came upon some dozen ants walking backwards. They stopped suddenly and turned round. The position of the bombardier beetle, taken, so to speak, in the very act of murder, was not enviable. I quickened my steps, anxious to see the issue of the meeting, which I thought would be fatal to the beetle. But things turned out very differently from my expectations.

The ants did not lose much time in closing upon their enemy, whom they evidently considered already their prey. At a signal from one of their party they formed themselves into a circle round their intended victim, and charged upon him all at once; but the beetle, rising on his hind legs, discharged upon the nearest what looked like a little bluish smoke. It came from the lower end of his body with a slight explosion. The bombardier beetle, wheeling round, treated each of his adversaries to a similar discharge; and the ants, taken aback by such a very extraordinary mode of defence, ran off as fast as their legs would carry them, leaving their adversary master of the field.

'Bravo, bravo, friend!' I exclaimed, astonished at this result. 'Allow me to compliment you on your splendid victory. You have an unrivalled weapon at your command.'

'I only made a little smoke,' replied the beetle, 'but you see that was enough.'

'Quite enough. Do show me the weapon you used.'

'I can't. I carry it inside my body; it is a little sac filled with an extremely volatile fluid, which is converted into vapour as soon as it comes in contact with the outer air.'

'And this vapour is of course very pungent and offensive, as it put the ants to flight?'

'Judge for yourself,' rejoined the beetle; and as he spoke the traitor turned round, and coming quite close to me gave me a discharge full in the face. I was half suffocated. The bluish vapour emitted an acid and horrible odour. When I recovered consciousness I saw the wicked rogue running off, laughing to himself at the trick he had just played me. 'Impudent rascal!' I shouted after

him. 'It's easy to see you belong to the carabus family. I shall meet you again some day, you may be bound. I've got an old score to settle with your family.'

I looked round to see if any one had been a witness of the insult the wretch had put upon me, which would greatly have added to my mortification, but fortunately there was nobody about. The ants were already a good distance off, and I was very glad of it.

I was now a long way from the ant-hill, and as it was beginning to get dusk I thought I would go quietly back to the centre of the clearing. The beeches at the foot of which the ants had established their colony stood out distinctly in their isolation in the centre of the treeless space, so there was no fear of my losing my way.

Near the ant-hill I noticed two pretty beetles of rather squat forms resting on some short grass. Their elytra were of a beautiful yellow colour with four large black spots. I was surprised to see them there, and could not help exclaiming,

'You are very bold to venture here; don't you know that you are quite close to an ants' nest? and you run a great risk of being devoured if you stay where you are.'

'We have nothing to fear from

the ants,' was the reply; 'we have known them long, and are on the best of terms with them. In fact we spend the greater part of our lives amongst them. As larvae we live in their colony.'

'O, that alters the case, of course. I knew nothing about that.'

'We render services to them,' added the beetle I had addressed, 'and we of the clythridæ or ant-beetle family and ants have always understood each other very well.'

I left the ant-beetles with an assurance that nothing but the interest I felt in them would have led me to warn them of the danger in which I had supposed them to be, adding that as they were after all in no peril that I hoped they would pardon my remarks.

When it became dark I reëntered the ant-hill, satisfied with all that I had seen and learnt, the trick played me by the bombardier-beetle having been about the only disagreeable incident of my walk.

Some of the ants running about in the streets pointed out the way to my room, which, thanks to them, I found without difficulty; and having barricaded the door, I settled myself to pass a second night in my new quarters.

(To be continued.)

BLUE EYES AND GOLDEN HAIR.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

BY ANNIE THOMAS (MRS. PENDER CUDLIP).

CHAPTER I.

A soft western wind is breathing rapturously over everything, extracting as it passes the full sweetness from the myriad flowers of June. At the summit of the slope of the hill-pasture there is a gate, dividing it from the adjoining wood. In front of this gate there is stretched a huge tawny mastiff, half-asleeping, only refraining from doing so wholly out of a sense of duty towards his young mistress, who is perched on the gate-post above him. Her lap is full of flowers—of hair-grasses and blue-bells, wild geraniums and St. John's Wort, poppies and celandine. But amidst all these bright beautiful flowers of June there is not one so blue as her eyes, not one so golden as her hair. A huge bouquet, a mass of harmoniously-blended tints, is growing rapidly in her skilful hands, and she is perfectly absorbed in her pretty task. Presently she is startled and interrupted by a voice, which says,

'Will you be good enough to make that horrible dog of yours move, Miss Eldon?'

'With pleasure. Tartar dear, get up,' the girl answers, bowing her head courteously towards a large lady, who is standing close by, breathing hard, partly with annoyance at the dog being in her path, and partly with the exertion of having breasted the hill. The obedient dog rises un-

willingly enough; the lady has a tussle with the gate, and failing to open it, is fain to have recourse again to Miss Eldon.

'Do you think you could manage this for me? It's so stiff, I can't move it.'

'I'll try,' the girl says, springing lightly down and swinging the gate open in a moment. She stands back in an attitude of utter unconcern for the lady to pass through, but rather to her surprise Mrs. Granville pauses, puts out her hand in a half-hearted kind of way, and says,

'I am sorry to have disturbed you; your occupation is a very pretty and pleasing one. But, my dear Miss Eldon, *don't* you think you could find something better to do with your time than to spend it in wandering about with a nasty dog, and in gathering wild flowers?'

The girl listens to this exordium with the sweetest patience and the sunniest smile that girlhood has ever expressed. At its conclusion she remounts her gate-post, and from that vantage-ground she speaks:

'You are very kind to trouble yourself about the disposition of my time. If you will shut the gate, Tartar can lie down again.'

Mrs. Granville does not shut the gate; she bangs it, and walks away without a word of farewell to the young lady who is seated on its post. Mrs. Granville is the wife of the squire of the parish,

the greatest landowner and richest commoner in the county. She has ridden rough-shod over the necks of all who have come in contact with her locally, up to the period of Daisy Eldon marking an epoch in local life. It is a serious crumple in Mrs. Granville's rose-leaf in these days that Daisy Eldon should have put, not so much a fullstop to her triumphant career, as a note of interrogation as to why she should pursue it.

These are glebe-lands over which Mrs. Granville is passing now, and so she cannot order Daisy, the rector's daughter, off them. But the 'time will come, my young lady, the time will come, when you'll be sorry that you didn't show me a little more attention,' she thinks, as she gets herself out of the sunny fields into her own well-kept shady gardens.

Luncheon is on the table by the time Mrs. Granville gets home, and her husband is there to partake of it with her.

'You look tired, my dear,' he says, putting his perception of her hot flustered appearance into the most agreeable form of words his complacent mind can conceive.

'Tired! I should think so!' she retorts; and then she goes on garulously to state that she has been on a mission of mercy to the village among 'her poor' this morning, and that she has had a serious annoyance in coming home through the glebe-path.

'It seems that Daisy opened the gate for you,' her husband expostulates. 'She can't help the latches being in bad order, you know.'

Mr. Granville has a human weakness for Daisy's beauty and goodness; her sweet blue eyes and her mastiff Tartar are not hateful to him as they are to his wife. Therefore he nerves himself to the

task of offering this faint apology for her; but the fact of his doing so rouses his wife's wrath.

'How can you defend such idleness and wicked neglect, Mr. Granville! The girl had no business there at that time of day, and the gate-latch ought to be mended. Her father is a negligent thriftless man, and her mother is not one bit better. If they kept their children at home and made them useful, perhaps they would be able to afford to mend their gates. I blushed, I positively blushed, this morning when I thought of a woman—a mother—allowing her daughter to fritter away her time as Mrs. Eldon allows Daisy to fritter hers away. The girl will be a byword and a scorn to the neighbourhood. Fancy her sitting at twelve in the morning on a gatepost, with a dog!'

'She might have done worse, and sat there with a man,' Mr. Granville chuckles; but the ill-timed frivolity simply drives Mrs. Granville to do more doughty deeds against the offending Daisy.

'I don't like joking about serious matters,' she says severely, 'and even you will admit that the Eldons' case is a very serious one. They are positively not living like gentlepeople. How can *one* servant do the work of that huge house for that huge family? And they owe money to every tradesman in the neighbourhood.'

'I pity them with my whole heart,' Mr. Granville says, with emotion; 'and I'd gladly pull in for a year or two, and pay off all Eldon's liabilities, if he would only let me. It breaks my heart when I think of the way in which he works himself to death in the parish, and then of the home he has to go to. A scholar and gentleman, a man of culture and refinement, to have come to this—that he is scouted by a set of people

who ought to feel honoured by his knowing them! It breaks my heart.'

'If he is a scholar, why doesn't he turn his scholarship to account? If he is a gentleman, why doesn't he pay his debts as a gentleman? I should. If he has refinement and culture, why does he live in all that wretched muddle and misery that they do live in at the rectory? My dear John, depend upon it, that if he were all you say he is, he wouldn't be in the plight he is in now.'

Mrs. Granville is so pleased with her own rhetoric that she does not require any answer from her husband, and he is equally well pleased at not being required to make one. His partisanship for Mr. Eldon is of the flimsiest order after all; it shrivels up and becomes mere nothingness whenever her tongue of flame shoots out at it.

Meantime Daisy has descended from her gate-post and gone home. The glebe-fields are on the other side of the village from the rectory. And so it comes about that Daisy passes through the village street just at that noontide hour when all business is suspended, and the inhabitants are at liberty to disport themselves on their respective thresholds. The butcher fronts her on his door-step with a gory white apron on, and as she stops for Tartar to receive his customary tribute in the shape of a bit of paunch, she finds that well-known appalling red and greasy looking book slipped into her hand.

'I've had no settlement for a many months, Miss Daisy,' the man says apologetically. 'If you could get your pa to attend to it, I should be that obliged to you—'

He stops abruptly, checked in his righteous endeavour to get his own by the supreme beauty and the

misery expressed in Daisy's young face as she bends it listeningly towards him. Her slim hand has closed on the terrible book, or he would take it from her and beg her 'not to trouble herself about it.' As it is, he feels as if he had boxed with a lamb or wrestled with a kitten when she says,

'I'll show it to papa, Mr. Grimes—not that showing it will do much good, I fear. It's terrible that you should have to go without your money. Would you like to have Tartar?'

The tears spring into the bluest eyes that have ever opened upon the world as she says this, for in offering Tartar she makes the grandest voluntary self-sacrifice that it is in her power to make, or in her imagination to conceive. Daisy and Tartar have been friends and comrades since the puppyhood of the latter, six years ago, and Daisy shrinks from meeting Tartar's eyes now as she offers him to a butcher in payment of her father's bill.

'I wouldn't take Tartar from you, Miss Daisy—no, not if I was sure I should never see a penny of your pa's money,' Grimes says ecstatically; and Tartar, who knows that he is being discussed, expresses his satisfaction at the turn the conversation has taken by frowning heavily, slobbering, and vigorously wagging his large plump tail. That he incidentally helps himself to a loin-chop off the open shop-board as Grimes retires into his emporium, and Daisy pursues her homeward path, is nothing to Tartar's discredit. He comes of a race who avowedly 'take whens'er they have the power;' and as their power is vast, it is an act of grace on the part of this scion of the stock that he contents himself with one chop on this occasion instead of taking the run of his teeth on a prime young

lamb that is hanging up well within his reach.

'You wicked thief, you dear unprincipled old dog!' Daisy says, as he trots up to her side just as she enters the ill-kept rectory grounds, 'isn't it a dreadful thing to need food and raiment, Tartar, when one can't pay for either? O Tartar, Tartar, I've no business to enjoy the sun and flowers and you in idleness, while all the others are working.'

She does not loiter along sentimentally as she says this to her dog. She runs briskly up the drive, taking especially keen note as she goes of the weeds that relieve its surface. 'How they do flourish and grow apace!' she remarks to herself and to Tartar. 'It's very odd that the same soil and form of culture shouldn't suit the flowers, that agrees so wonderfully well with the constitution of the weeds.'

The house itself is a pleasant-enough object at this time of the year. It is a long, low, rambling, old two-storied building, with latticed windows, and a verandah running round the front and one end of it. The lattice-windows glimmer out from amidst masses of foliage now, and the pillars of the verandah are wreathed with cluster roses, with jasmine and clematis and ivy-leaved geraniums. Outside the house there is an atmosphere of sweetness and refinement that is very congenial to Daisy. We shall see presently how it is over the threshold. The porch-door is open, and she passes into the hall, which runs through to the back of the house, where another door gives upon the croquet-lawn. This is also open, and through it Daisy sees five or six of her brothers and sisters knocking the balls about. She is about to join them when her mother's voice arrests her,

and Daisy turns into the dining-room, where a graceful harassed-looking woman is striving to make an obtuse servant understand the directions given for the hundredth time as to the arrangement of the table.

'Mamma dear, don't exert yourself. I ought to have been in before to see to all this; but I relied on one of the others helping you,' Daisy says apologetically.

Daisy has not yet learnt the lesson which her younger sisters are assiduously endeavouring to teach her—that it is worse than vain on her part to rely upon them to relieve their overstrained mother in any household emergency. They are affectionate, unselfish, and willing enough to 'help mamma' in the abstract. But they are young, full of bright untamed spirits, and happily indifferent as yet to the daily round of confusion which is run in the household. Daisy, the eldest daughter and flower of as fine-looking a flock as there is in the county, is also, as Mrs. Eldon declares emphatically, 'her mother's right hand.' And Daisy is more than this. She is chief counsellor in all family complications, chief sympathiser in all family sorrows, chief smotherer of all family difficulties. Daisy's clear blue eyes always beam hopeful promise of assistance upon her mother; and in some way or other the promise is always fulfilled.

Twenty-one years ago, when the Rev. Thomas Eldon married Miss Bertram, prognostications had been uttered freely as to the match being the making of him. The Bertrams were a power in the county, and it was quite an accepted fact that they would in time do 'something very good' for the husband of the daughter of their house. But time passed on; Mrs. Eldon's brother ascend-

ed the throne in place of his father, and Mr. Eldon still struggled on at Burnsleigh on three hundred and fifty pounds a year.

This income had been sufficient, and but barely sufficient, in the days when their family had been smaller and younger. But now, with eight daughters and two sons, it barely enables them to live at all. The parish is large, struggling, and poor, and the priest of it cannot shut his eyes to the needs, or steel his heart to the distress, of those who are even worse off than himself. He does 'what he can,' everybody admits; and little as that something is, it still seriously cripples his very small resources. There are times when Mrs. Eldon thinks with something like bitterness of the manner of life which is lived by her kith and kin over at Bertram Court, and of the solitary sumptuous state which her only sister, Miss Bertram, keeps in London. Long ago this lady reaped the reward of years of interested devotion to a wealthy old uncle by being left his sole heiress. From which time she has kept aloof considerably from her sister and her sister's family out of a wholesome dread she has that 'they may think that she ought to do something for them.' Miss Bertram has never been tempted to commit the folly of making a love-match herself. Naturally she is rather severe on those who not only have been guilty of the enormity, but who, having failed in correctly counting the cost of it, stretch forth appealing hands to others who have been wiser in their generation for aid and succour. Mrs. Eldon has never asked her rich unmarried sister for so much as one of the crumbs that fall from the latter's well-ordered and plenteous table. But still that sister cannot quite stultify her conscience, nor

can she utterly forget that they are daughters of one house, and loved each other well when they were little children. Mrs. Eldon's poverty and generally overweighted condition is a sore trial to Miss Bertram; so she thinks as little about it as she possibly can, and tries to persuade herself that her callousness to their condition is merely a just reminder to her brother-in-law and sister of their extreme imprudence in having brought themselves and their children to this pass. If Mr. Eldon would make his name ring as a Broad-Church theologian, or as an eloquent and heart-stirring expounder of Evangelical traditions, Miss Bertram would feel something like sisterly affection for his wife. But he is absolutely unknown and unimportant beyond the boundaries of his own parish. He is merely a hard-working, good, conscientious, highly - educated gentleman, and as such he does not redound to Miss Bertram's credit in any way in her London set.

But latterly Miss Bertram has begun to take an interest in Daisy—an interest that does not show itself in doing anything definitely good for the girl, but that is eager to collect all the information that can be got about her. For two or three months of the London season Mrs. Granville occupies the adjoining house to that in which Miss Bertram holds solitary state in Wimpole-street; and there is a good deal of intercourse of the severely social order between the two ladies. That is to say, they give each other the tips of their fingers when the exigencies of society thrust them together, and they dine at each other's houses two or three times, and wag their heads at each other when they meet in the Park, and are altogether quite 'on terms.' It is

quite pleasant to Mrs. Granville, who was a girl in the same county set with the 'Bertram girls' when they were all young, to be able to tone down Miss Bertram's pride in her present position every now and then by judicious and patronising mention of the Eldons. Mrs. Granville has more than once goaded Miss Bertram into a state that would have made her verbally dangerous, had not the 'social bonds which bind us from the living truth' restrained her. There have been moments when Mrs. Granville's well-modulated laments over the manner in which 'matters seem to grow worse and worse with the poor Eldons' have robbed Miss Bertram of much of that serenely selfish satisfaction with a world which has dealt so kindly with herself, and which is her normal condition. 'People ought to know better than to make poverty-stricken marriages; they make them for the gratification of their own idle fancies, and then punish people who have been more provident by either perpetually asking for assistance, or by living in such a beggarly way that one blushes to own them.' This Miss Bertram has said to herself over and over again when smarting under the Granville lash. But this year she has found that there is balm in Gilead after all. Mrs. Granville sits in the seat of the scornful, as of old, about the Eldons. But Mr. Granville tells Miss Bertram with yearning hearty gladness and satisfaction that her 'niece Daisy is the loveliest girl in the county.'

'She's a girl the sight of whom makes an old man young again,' he tells Daisy's aunt; 'a sweet young creature, the sunshine of the parish!'

'When I saw her some years ago she was rather a pretty little

child; still I'm surprised at your account of her, quite surprised!'

Miss Bertram says this guardedly and rather coldly, for she is conscious that Mrs. Granville is closely observant of her manner of hearing tidings of the 'poor Eldons.'

'She really is a nice-looking girl; at least if you like that yellow hair, you would call her nice-looking,' Mrs. Granville says; 'but she has not been well brought up—left to run wild; quite like a village lassie, you know. I assure you I was quite shocked last week, when I had occasion to cross some fields on my way home from my poor, to see Miss Eldon sitting on a gate-post, wasting her time with a lot of trumpery wild flowers. It was not the thing at all for a girl in her position to be doing at that hour in the morning. And she had a great wild beast of a dog with her, that I really wonder at her father permitting her to keep, considering the extremely unpleasant state of his circumstances.'

Miss Bertram blushes angrily as she listens. The sword enters into her spirit as Mrs. Granville thus triumphantly dares to pity, condemn, and depreciate the Eldon family. But a timely recollection of the undeniable ugliness of Mrs. Granville's own daughters, and of what has just been said relative to Daisy's loveliness, revives the fainting spirit of Daisy's aunt. She has been struck by Mrs. Granville, and she will not hesitate now to give a counter-thrust. Accordingly she unsheathes her weapon and says suavely,

'I have been almost forgetting that Daisy is a grown-up young lady now. I must have her up with me for a few weeks, and give her the chance that her beauty deserves. There is a great deal of pleasure in taking a lovely girl

into society, especially when she belongs to one.'

Mrs. Granville feels the stab, but she will not suffer herself to wince.

'It's very kind and generous of you to think of giving this treat to your niece, my dear Miss Bertram; but *do* you think that it's quite wise? Life, as they live it at Burnsleigh, will seem a very unendurable thing to Daisy Eldon after an experience, however brief, of your clique. I have often refrained from asking her to my house for fear of unfitting her for her own home.'

'I have no doubt but that you have been all that is thoughtful and considerate in the way of keeping Daisy back,' Miss Bertram says bitterly; 'but if she's all your husband says she is, and she *pleases me*, there shall be no more painful contrasts in her life.'

CHAPTER II.

Just about the time that Daisy's prospects are under discussion between her almost unknown aunt and Mrs. Granville, Daisy hears tidings that seem very good and joyful to her. They are brought home by her father, who has gathered them from the best authority this morning.

'Lincoln tells me that Harry Poynter is coming home very soon, and he has had orders to see about doing the old place up at once,' Mr. Eldon tells them.

Now Lincoln is the steward of the Glenholme property, and the Glenholme property belongs to Harry Poynter, who has been abroad for many years, and who has only recently attained his majority. Some six years ago he visited Burnsleigh, but Glenholme was let to strangers then, and

Harry had made his head-quarters at the rectory. He had come accompanied by a big mastiff puppy, and when he left them again the puppy Tartar remained behind with Daisy. This episode has been the sole bit of romance in Daisy's life. What wonder that she recalls it vividly and tenderly now when she hears that the young heir of Glenholme is coming back to his own again?

'Harry was a dear boy when he was here last, that time when he gave me Tartar,' she remarks meditatively, when her father has brought his communication respecting Mr. Poynter to a close. 'I wonder if he will have grown too big a man for us now.'

'He'll have grown too big a man to swing with you in the garden or roast chestnuts with you in the harness-room; and as we have no other form of entertainment to offer him, we need not trouble our heads about him, I think, Daisy,' Mrs. Eldon says, in a tone that is indicative of a desire to crush out the dawning interest in the 'coming man' from her daughter's heart.

'Now, mamma, it's not like you to be ungracious to big men, any more than to little boys,' Daisy says coaxingly. 'We gave Harry a greeting when he was a hobbledehoy, and we wanted no return for it. We'll give him a greeting again now that he has grown out of hobbledehoyhood, and there let it end—we shall want no return for that either.'

'Why, Daisy, how seriously you speak?' Daisy's next sister, Ethel, says inquiringly.

'Not seriously—savagely I'm afraid!' Daisy cries, rousing herself from her unwontedly serious mood. 'For a minute I felt all awry with everything. Mamma dear, you are right: a young man about whose coming home a fuss

is made, and paid for, is too big a man for us.'

'That's just one of the nonsensical notions you girls take up,' Daisy's elder brother remarks, lounging into the room with the air of one who is quite competent to put them all in the straight path that shall surely lead them to a right judgment. He is a year or two older than Daisy, and he too, like his old friend Henry Poynter, Esq., of Glenholme, has just attained his majority. But his majority has not brought him anything particularly good, saving the knowledge that he has to look out for himself in the future, and that if he wants bread-and-butter he must work for it. Willie is a clever, sweet-natured, true-hearted young fellow, full of a queer mixture of village simplicity and university audacity; for Mr. Eldon has made a mighty effort, crippling himself and the others horribly to do it. He has sent Willie to Oxford; and the boy has done well there, both as regards work and the making of friends. It is settled that in the course of a week or two he shall take his place as tutor to Lord Gerald Deane, the second son of the Marquis of Beauton, whose eldest son, Lord St. Briac, has been a college-friend of Willie's. Altogether it is gossiped in the village that the fortunes of the Eldon family are looking up a little just at this juncture; for almost simultaneously with the report of Willie's having obtained this tutorship, another rumour arises to the effect that 'Miss Daisy's rich aunt has asked her on a visit to London.'

That this is true soon becomes an ascertained fact. Daisy's departure causes more commotion in Burnsleigh than the coming home of the young owner of Glenholme. Everybody knows the girl with the big blue, black-lashed eyes, and

everybody likes her well. They have seen her grow up in their midst: this one has given her a ride on his horse; that one has given her the great delight of feeding his poultry and chasing his pigs. The farmers one and all pay their tithes more willingly to Mr. Eldon than they would to any other man, simply because he is 'Miss Daisy's father;' and as for the poor people (to whom she has but little to give, poor child, but a few stray pence at times, and an unceasingly kind interest), they would sacrifice Mrs. Granville and her ill-favoured daughters at any given moment in cold blood for the sake of Daisy Eldon.

Miss Bertram's invitation to her niece is couched in the kindest terms; and late as her recognition of them is, they regard her tardiness with leniency on account of the consideration she shows for them.

'I want Daisy to stay with me until I leave town in August,' she writes; 'and perhaps by that time my niece and I will have become so well used to each other that we may both find it pleasant for her to accompany me to the seaside.' Then Miss Bertram goes on to say that though it will be better that Daisy should defer getting a regular outfit until she, Miss Bertram, can superintend the transaction herself, still a little ready money may be desirable on the occasion, and she therefore begs to enclose her sister a fifty-pound note, to be used for Daisy's benefit.

Naturally the girl is enchanted at the prospect of the change of scene and society which has thus suddenly and unexpectedly opened out before her. She has borne her portion, and more than her portion, of the burden of the weary, straightened, dull home-life brightly and uncomplainingly.

But she is young, and full of that rare capacity for pleasure and excitement which only belongs to heart-free healthy youth. The thought that almost immediately she is to be given the freedom of the fashionable London life of which she has read, and faint rumours of which have reached her in the course of various stilted conversations she has held with the Miss Granvilles, delights, dazzles, almost intoxicates her. She has, like every other girl, dreamt of ballroom scenes of gaiety and splendour; she has longed to hear operas and see plays and drive in the Park and ride a gallant steed in Rotten Row; and now, by the grace of aunt Bertram, she will be enabled to realise her dreams. Like every other properly constituted girl, too, she rejoices in the thought of the pretty dresses and dainty boots and gloves, and the fairy-like structures of lace and flowers yclept bonnets, which will shortly adorn her supple slender figure and golden-crowned little head. But still, through the midst of all these pleasurable anticipations, there runs a vein of faint regret for all that she is leaving. She is the light of the house, the needle of the family, her mother's counsellor in all the never-ending, constantly-recurring household complications, her father's confidante in his numerous times of tribulation. Tartar, too, is a serious drawback to her tasting unalloyed felicity in the idea of leaving home. The dear old dog is full of excellent feeling and good intentions; but she knows that he will not transfer his allegiance from herself to any member of her family, and that he will get into Bohemian habits of prowling about the village and picking up trifles in the way of rashly exposed beefsteaks and shoulders of mutton, in exchange for which no coin of the realm will be given.

'And if you're chained up your sweet temper will be spoilt, my dog,' she observes to him, when she is telling him of the flight she is about to take. 'O Tartar, what an aunty deed it would be on Miss Bertram's part to include you in the invitation!'

She is sitting in the same reprehensible position—namely, on the gate-post at the top of the hill-pasture—with the same reprehensible companion lying at her feet, as on the occasion of our first seeing her. She has been in the habit of sitting here during many hours of all the summer days of her life. She has come here to blow the cobwebs away many a time, when family distress, which she has been powerless either to relieve or assuage, has driven her out to the open for a taste of the sweetness and light which cannot exist in a home in which poverty reigns. She has come here in hours of happy idleness, when there has been no claim upon her industrious hands or her clear little brain in the home department; come here with some beloved book, in the perusal of which she has lost all memory of the harrowing influence of the home-life of incessant contrivance and non-achievement. But she has never come here before with such an undefinable mixture of sadness and gladness in her heart as is therein this day.

There is a good deal of pathos in the majority of partings. Quite as much—and to the full quite as true—pathos in the tearing oneself away from the places as from the people who have endeared the places to us. The fact that

'No more by thee
My steps shall be
For ever and for ever'

is not a lamentable thing very often when the bare fact of leaving the brook is isolated. But it

is impossible to consider the 'bare fact' alone. A thousand associations—some tender, some true, some lacking the genuine ring of the metal, some sad, but all touching—well up as the hour of parting approaches. And the scenes that have many a time been pronounced uninteresting, and the life that has often been avowed to be flat, tame, and unprofitable, are regretted keenly, chiefly because they are to be left.

There is a good deal of this phase of feeling in Daisy's mood this warm sweet day in June, as she sits here looking down over the waving pastures and across the leafy woods, and sees the smoke curling up from many a chimney in the village, on whose hearth she will be missed. Then her eyes roam away to the other side of the valley, and rest upon picturesque many-gabled Glenholme; and she remembers that its owner will be home next week, and that she is going away for a visit of many months to-morrow.

'He'll think that I have forgotten him altogether when he finds that I have gone away just as he comes back, and that I've even left the dog he gave me behind me. Tartar, if you could only speak, old dog, you could tell him a few truths, couldn't you? But, perhaps, he may not care to hear them now that he's coming back to take what Mr. Lincoln calls "his proper place in the county."'

Somehow or other this reflection has such an effect on the young lady, before whom such a golden vista is stretching, that she takes her way home through the village dejectedly for the first time in her life. And her friends then regard her, in consequence of this unwonted aspect, more complacently than ever; for they think that it 'shows such nice feeling on

Daisy's part not to be elated at the prospect of leaving them.'

Her new trunks are neatly packed this night with good stores of the choicest wearing-apparel that the adjacent country town, and the unceasing efforts of two dressmakers and milliners, have been able to achieve in the time; and Daisy stands ready dressed in the hall, saying the last good-bye, waiting for the wagonette from the Burnsleigh Arms to come and convey her to the railway-station seven miles off. There are a good many tears shed at the parting. Poor Mrs. Eldon looks forward with a sinking heart to the weary weeks which must elapse before she has any more efficient aid in her herculean task of trying to keep things in order than may be given her by Ethel. That Ethel is as great a darling in her way as Daisy, no one can deny; but she is a perfect mistress of the art of creating confusion and disorder. But even through the tears which blind the mother's eyes the mother perceives proudly that this eldest child of hers is as fair a flower as can ever have blossomed, no matter under what conditions of luxury, care, culture, and refinement.

'Daisy will stand comparison with any of the wealthy aristocrats whom my sister worships,' she says to her husband. And though he tries to be partly amused at, and partly contemptuous of, the maternal vanity, he shares his wife's pride in the glory of Daisy's beauty to its fullest extent.

In truth, though in days to come the choicest triumphs of the respective arts of Mesdames Elise and Louise may adorn Daisy's person, she will never look lovelier than she does this morning in her plain blue-cambric dress and white hat with the one blue feather. The soft cerulean tint

harmonises with the clear transparent skin and with the bright golden hair marvellously well.

'Bless you, my own!' her mother whispers when the moment for the final farewell comes. 'I feel as if you would never be quite one of us again.'

'And I feel a conviction that I shall come back and live and die in Burnaleigh, mamma,' the girl says, feigning a cheerfulness she does not feel. Then for a minute or two she becomes a mere shuttlecock in the midst of those affectionate battledores, her brothers and sisters; and presently, after hugging Tartar, Daisy is gone.

It is six o'clock in the evening when she reaches the terminus, where her aunt's carriage and her aunt's maid await her. The maid has come on the mission with the very faintest interest in her heart concerning the object of it. In Miss Bertram's country-bred niece she has anticipated finding a *gauche*, ill-dressed young woman without 'any style,' whom she determines to 'put in her proper place' at once, in order that no opposition influence to her own may be obtained over Miss Bertram. But when this perfectly self-possessed, beautiful, and well-dressed young lady looks at her quietly, and directs her to 'see to my luggage,' Wharton, Miss Bertram's 'own maid,' renounces all her preconceived putting-down intentions hurriedly, and finds herself obeying the intruder instead of dictating to her.

Nevertheless, when they get into the carriage and roll away towards Wimpole-street, the 'pampered menial' makes one attempt at getting the whip-hand of the 'poor relation.' If Daisy can only be made to feel her own insignificance at starting sufficiently for Wharton to venture to offer her advice, then will her

mistress's niece be an innocuous element in the house, Wharton feels tolerably well convinced. Acting on this conviction, she says,

'What a nice thing for you, miss, to be sure, to have such a treat as this!'

Daisy levels her long sweet blue eyes at the speaker, and fixes the latter well with them before she replies.

'I don't understand you; you must tell me what you mean.'

Wharton fidgets under the gaze; for all their sweetness, the blue eyes can look stern enough when occasion requires.

'I mean that it must be such a grand change for you, miss, to come up to a lady like your haunt, who lives in such style as will surprise you. I know what it is for young ladies to come away from their quiet country homes, where they never see no life nor nothing. They feel quite lost very often.'

'I don't think you need trouble yourself about my feeling that; thank you,' Daisy puts in quietly.

But Wharton feels that she must accomplish her noble aim now or never, and so goes on eagerly,

'So any little advice I can give you about what you had better get and what will please your aunt, I'm sure I shall be most happy to offer. Miss Bertram, like all the great ladies, has her moods, and I understand them, and can often give you a hint. You see, I've been used to great ladies and their ways all my life.'

'And I have not,' Daisy says coolly. 'I will tell my aunt what you say; and if she wishes me to put myself under the tuition of her maid, I shall know what to do.'

'No offence was meant, miss,' the woman says confusedly; for she feels that she has been worsted

by the young lady, and imperilled her own position with the young lady's aunt.

CHAPTER III.

DAISY has been just a month in London. She has been presented, and danced at Marlborough House; she has heard Patti and Nicolini in half a dozen operas; she has been to all the best theatres; watched the polo lists at Hurlingham, and incited the champions on either side to doughty deeds for the sake of her approving smiles. She has been the belle of a dozen ballrooms, the secret of success at many of those usually dreary things, 'afternoons at home,' which her aunt will persist in frequenting; and altogether has approved herself the best investment Miss Bertram could possibly have made from a society point of view.

Daisy has, in fact, brought an enormous amount of grist to that mill of fashion, in which Miss Bertram is so gratified at being ground. The girl, with her fresh, vigorous, happy youth and beauty, has taught the selfish wealthy old maid some useful lessons. With her whole heart, and with all the intensity of her vigorous young body and mind, Daisy can enjoy—and does enjoy—the enjoyable. With equal whole-heartedness and intensity she spurns the most glorious and enjoyable ends, if the means by which she can attain them are not without flaw or blemish.

She has not been admirably well paraded on the boards of that great theatre, the world of fashion, for nothing, her aunt feels proudly, when Sir Bolingbroke Bray begins to haunt her path, and intrigue for invitations to houses at which he knows the Daisy will appear.

But the Daisy is wofully blind to her own interests, it seems to Miss Bertram, as she remarks that Daisy's smiling flexible lips rarely open when Sir Bolingbroke is her partner, and that if her eyes light on him by any chance there comes a look of sorrowful scorn into their depths, that is very detrimental to her chances of becoming Lady Bray. 'Daisy's a darling,' her aunt thinks, in common with every one else; 'but baronets of ancient lineage and large rent-roll do not grow on every bush.' Moreover, the young man is handsome, and quite clever enough for every-day life. What can be blinding Daisy's vision that she does not see the advantages of such a match? Perhaps it may be that Daisy is in no haste to be 'woo'd and married and a'; by reason of some vague unfounded hope she may have of inheriting her aunt's property. Miss Bertram determines to rid her niece of the burden this error will be to her without delay, and to tackle the subject with spirit and determination, one morning while Daisy is waiting for the horses to come round for her to go into the Row.

The girl, who is very pretty in any and every kind of garment that the ingenuity of garment-makers can devise, looks supremely well in her habit. For erectness, for ease, for having that air of being at home in her saddle without which the most daring and skilful of riders look out of place on horseback, Daisy challenges competition with the most famous horsewomen of the day. She takes her fast-trotting little bay horse, the Knave of Hearts, through the throng at a pace which excites its admiration, and in a way that does not excite its awe. It is the sight of her on horseback which has brought Sir

Bolingbroke Bray to the conclusion that happiness and he will be strangers, unless he throws the handkerchief to her, and she picks it up with proper humility and flattering eagerness.

'You like this riding, and the round altogether, don't you, my dear?' her aunt begins.

'Like it! I love it!' the girl replies. 'You have given me so much happiness, aunt Bertram! For this one month's joy that I've had, I can never be sufficiently grateful to you, even if I spend all the rest of my life in thanking you for this bit of gold that you've let into it.'

Miss Bertram is almost moved from her disillusionary purpose by the ungrudging way in which Daisy pours forth her gratitude. However, the old lady nerves herself to the task by a timely remembrance of Sir Bolingbroke, the young baronet who has been touted for assiduously by the most long-sighted mammas during the whole of this and last season. The consideration that Daisy may do what is wise and well in the way of smiling upon his suit, if she imagines that unless she does so her only alternative will be to retire into the beautiful but monotonous shades of Burnside, checks Miss Bertram in the good resolve to be generous which she has almost made. Accordingly she steels her sympathetic heart, and says,

'I'm glad that your visit to me has been such a pleasant one, my dear Daisy; but I can't help feeling that there has been more amiability than discretion in my conduct towards you. I have given you a taste for a manner of life that is, of course, quite-dissimilar to the one you will have to lead at Burnside when you go home again. Look out there at the little Knave of Hearts; see how

his skin gleams in the sun. Poor child! How you will feel parting with that horse!'

'Yes, I shall feel it terribly,' Daisy admits, with a short sigh; 'but anyway, aunt Bertram, I have had the pleasure of which no one can rob me, of having ridden him, and of having seen that he is more admired than any horse in the Row.'

It occurs to Daisy, as she says this, that if her aunt's sorrow at the separation which is to ensue between horse and rider is very sincere, the way may easily be paved by Miss Bertram's gold for the Knave of Hearts taking up his residence permanently in Burnside.

'He is not more admired than his rider is, I hear on all sides,' Miss Bertram says, as archly as she can bring herself to speak in her anxiety. 'Sir Bolingbroke was saying only yesterday—'

'Something not worth hearing, I'm sure, as he said it. Now, aunt, I'm off.'

She holds her winsome face up to her aunt to be kissed, as she speaks, and the old lady takes it tenderly between her two withered ring-weighted hands, and says,

'My dear, I wish you would think it worth while to listen to something he has to say to you. Think, Daisy: he can give his wife all, and far more than, I have been able to give you of pleasure and luxury. You would like to have your own carriages, your own opera-box, your own place in society, as one of its brightest ornaments; and you would like to be in a position to help those at home, wouldn't you, Daisy? Think of what you can do for your poor broken-down father and your worried worn-out mother. Think of the aid you might be to your brothers and sisters if you will only be wise. Wouldn't you like to have all the luxuries

and the power of doing good that I've named ?

'Very much indeed.'

'Then you will be wise ?

'I hope so, aunt Bertram. As you say, mamma is a worried and worn-out woman ; more shame to those who might have saved her from being either ! But she has always had the strength to teach her children to try to do what is right ; and if we attend to our mother's teaching, and try to do what is right, we shall surely do what is wise.'

'Then you will listen when Sir Bolingbroke speaks to you, as I know he is dying to speak, Daisy ?

'Yes, I will.'

'My darling sensible child ! You shall have the most perfect *trousseau* of the year ! You *will* listen ! My dearest hopes are realised !'

Miss Bertram caresses her niece more affectionately than she has ever caressed anything, save her white Persian cat, in her life before, for she sees in that niece the future Lady Bray. Her niece responds to these caresses by saying,

'I will listen to Sir Bolingbroke when he offers me the carriages and horses and jewels and opera-box you speak of. And when he has finished, I will ask him where the woman to whom they belong of right is. Aunt Bertram, do you think I am deaf ? Don't you think I have heard the story of his heartless neglect of the poor girl he married—neglect and unkindness which drove her so far wrong that he was able to divorce her ? Before Sir Bolingbroke persuades me to be his wife he must drag my memories, and undo the teaching of my mother's example !' And with these words on her lips, and righteous wrath against Sir Bolingbroke and all who would advocate his cause

with her in her heart, Daisy Elton goes away for her customary morning's ride.

It will be hard to renounce it all, the young blonde beauty feels, as she turns in at the Apeley House Gate, followed by her model groom, and lets the Knave of Hearts go off at that striding trot of his, which easily covers eighteen miles within the hour. The Row is very full this morning, and a hundred hats are raised to Daisy as she winds her way skilfully through the crowd of riders on her way down. Dozens of other acquaintances, both masculine and feminine, are leaning against the railings and sitting upon the chairs. These bide their time patiently for a word or a bow or a nod from the young beauty, who is also reputed to be the rich Miss Bertram's heiress. Pleasure is expressed in the faces of all she knows at the sight of her, for Daisy has achieved the rare distinction of being liked by women as much as she is admired by men. She has never damaged a rival's cause by damning her with faint praise. She has never vaunted herself in any way, either by word or deed or look. She has never, in short, boasted or triumphed about herself to the depreciation of any other girl ; and so she is liked and imitated and courted by all the female portion of her aunt's coterie, who are wise enough in their generation to perceive that her chances are better than their own, in spite of her having made such a late appearance on the boards of society.

She is a very fair specimen of a well-bred young Englishwoman, as, having 'taken it out of him' in a sharp trot down to the Kensington Gardens rails, Daisy turns, and, holding her handsome little horse in to a walk, rides slowly

along. There is no 'doubt' about Miss Eldon, even in this place, where discernment is so sorely taxed. There is not a superfluous button, not an unnecessary bit of braid about her navy-blue habit; and round the brim of her hat there is not a superfluous half inch of tulle. You remark immediately that she does not ride to her audience, and that both horse and rider are perfect types of their respective kinds. But if you do not know her, you remark nothing further.

Truth to tell, she is riding the Knave of Hearts with most reprehensible carelessness this morning; for her mind is very much given to the consideration of that question concerning Sir Bolingbroke which her aunt has raised with auntly zeal and indiscretion. Miss Bertram's words have not borne all the fruit she intended them to bear; still they have had some weight with the girl, who has up to this morning enjoyed all that is enjoyable without troubling very much as to what is to follow. But now, as Daisy rides slowly along, she falls to thinking of what the home-life down at Burnaleigh is; and when she has thoroughly resuscitated the memories of it, she has it borne in upon her vividly that she will have to go back to that life, and resume it, just as though this brilliant episode had never come within her experience. The sweet blue eyes are gazing apparently at the living panorama before her. In reality they are looking into the future, and seeing all the gloom of it.

She is startled abruptly from her daydream by the Knave of Hearts suddenly swerving to the near side, and then returning to the path of duty by a series of plunges. Well-bred horse as he is, he cannot always control an

emotion of surprise, and he has experienced a profound one in seeing a young man who is leaning on the railings sweep off his hat in salute to Miss Eldon. He is an English horse, and utterly unaccustomed to the society of men who signalise the fact of their existence before the lady has nodded an acknowledgment of it.

Of course Daisy sits the shy. If I ever venture to unseat a heroine, it shall be in a little country lane, where no one can see her. For though such accidents do happen in public places in real life, it is not advisable that they should ever befall a heroine of romance. The majority prefer that she should be a sort of female Admirable Crichton, and it is well to respect the prejudices of the majority.

But though Daisy remains in the saddle, the shy arouses her suddenly from her daydream, and looking with understanding for the cause of the emotion of the Knave of Hearts, she finds it in a young, tall, lissom-figured man, whose swarthy face is glowing with satisfaction at the sight of her, and whose tawny eyes are riveted upon hers with a tender earnestness that brings vividly before her a half-forgotten scene, in which a handsome boy transferred a well-loved mastiff puppy to the care and ownership of a golden-haired slip of a girl.

The Knave is almost brought upon his haunches by a dexterous turn of her wrist, and in a moment she is leaning forward holding her hand out with hearty gladness.

'Harry Poynter! How did you know me?'

'By your eyes and hair, Daisy,' the young fellow replies; 'they're not changed, though you are. But I ask the same question: how did you know me?'

'I knew—' she begins, then she hesitates. It is difficult to say how she recognised him. In the old days he had been the pleasantest object on which her vision ever lighted, and now, though he is utterly different from the boy whom she remembers, there is no one who may with him compare. 'You're very different from what you were when you gave me Tartar; but still somehow you're like your old self,' she says at last; and as she says it she sees Sir Bolingbroke Bray approaching her.

'So you remember Tartar too,' Mr. Poynter says delightedly; and her attention being caught by Sir Bolingbroke at this juncture, it is some few moments before she can reply.

'Remember Tartar! Does one forget one's dearest friend after being separated from him for a month?'

'Who's the happy man who occupies that proud position, Miss Eldon?' Sir Bolingbroke says lightly, laughing. He quite means to have Daisy for his wife; but it does not stir the faintest jealousy within him to hear her speak of some one unknown as her dearest friend. If she will only become Lady Bray he is quite prepared to bear the burden of her forming a dozen 'dearest friendships,' if she feels so inclined.

'He's only a dog,' Daisy says; and then she turns a little in her saddle, and inclines her head slightly to Sir Bolingbroke, in a way that ought to show him that she considers their interview at an end—that he is free to, and she ready and willing that he should, ride on—and that she desires to resume uninterrupted intercourse with the handsome, debonaire-looking young fellow who is leaning over the rails.

But this is not at all within the

limits of Sir Bolingbroke's intentions. A rival in the abstract, or even a defined rival if he only be absent, is endurable enough to the young baronet. But a rival well defined and present, who engrosses Daisy's attention away from Sir Bolingbroke Bray, is quite a different thing.

'I shall have the honour—your aunt has accorded me her permission—of being your escort this morning, Miss Eldon,' he says, sitting at ease coolly, and regarding Mr. Poynter with the same lazy expression of interest which he might exert himself to evince at sight of an Indian brave or a fine specimen of a wild red-deer. There is about Harry Poynter such vitality, such young, healthy, happy vigour and freshness, that he is a marked object here in the ranks of languid, bored, fashionable-looking men. It is not that the recently returned squire of Glenholme is rough, unpolished, ill-dressed, or 'bad form' in any way; it is simply his looking thoroughly 'alive' which distinguishes him from the majority of the men who are inertly reclining in divers attitudes that are expressive of utter weariness on the railings under the blazing July sun. Daisy, who is replete with this same physical force herself, perceives and appreciates it quickly in another, especially when it is presented in so fair a guise as in the person of her old friend Harry Poynter.

Tartar is a very thawing topic. They discuss him as he was in the days of his infantile grace and innocence, and Daisy describes the dog into which he has developed. She winds up her essay on Tartar by saying,

'But how is it that you've been so long in England without seeing him?'

'Because,' he says, 'I denied

myself that bliss in order to watch for the opportunity, which has come at last, of seeing you.'

Daisy's pearly face grows pink as she hears him, and her eyes gleam like stars with the sweet pleasure she feels in her old friend's remembrance of her. Of what avail is it to Sir Bolingbroke now that he has the place at her off-side for the remainder of this morning's ride? Harry Poynter has the nearer place in her interest; and *that* once fairly awakened, the end is not so very unforeseen.

'It has been the one drawback to my otherwise perfect felicity up here, that I wasn't down at Burnleigh when they welcomed you to your "own again,"' she says to young Poynter, disregarding grandly the symptoms Sir Bolingbroke is lazily developing of its being his opinion that it would be well for them to move on.

'I had stayed away from "my own" for a good many years for other people's pleasure; it occurred to me that it wouldn't hurt other people very much if I stayed away a little longer for my own,' he answers, sparkling up with a sense of the entire appreciation she will have for all that is meant or may be meant by his speech. 'I didn't feel inclined to hie me home the instant I was free to do so; the place and I know so little of each other that I shall see very little of it, if itself is the only attraction it offers me.'

'You shall not be an absentee,' she cries out. 'I mean—I beg your pardon, Mr. Poynter; but I live in the place, you know, and understand all about the advantages and disadvantages of your absence or presence. The people you let it to were rich and good enough in their way; but they thought more about the London

shop by which they make their money—very naturally—than they did about ameliorating the condition of the poor or oiling the social hinges of the neighbourhood. And papa was a sort of stand between those new people and the Granvilles and others of the Granville ilk, and papa suffered. Don't you understand now why I wish you to go home and to stay at home—as you will, Harry?'

She bends forward again to offer him her hand in farewell as she says this, and a smile like a sunburst gleams forth from her glorious eyes and breaks the lines that have been sombre about her flexible lips.

'O Daisy, Daisy, if you look like that I'll go to Glenholme or to anywhere else for your sake,' he mutters; and then he adds aloud, 'May I have your address? I hear you are staying with your aunt, Miss Bertram.'

She gives him her card at once gladly, and now Sir Bolingbroke feels that the time has come for him to assert himself.

'In the interests of the Knave I must beg you to come on, Miss Eldon; he has chafed against your unconsciously tightened hand till his mouth is bleeding.'

She slackens her rein at once, and the clever little horse steps out in his matchless style without another suggestion being made to him. 'Come and call on us to-morrow,' the girl lilts out to Harry Poynter, turning her bright face towards him encouragingly; and as he shouts back his promise to do so, he resolves that he will call and call again till he wins the right to call this darling Daisy his own.

Sir Bolingbroke is very sensible. He sees that Daisy is in a rarefied atmosphere, the chief elements of which are recollection and possibility, admiration for a new type,

sympathy with a good-looking adventurer upon an untried career, and girlish glee in the part she is playing of wielder of strong men's wills.

'Let her nourish her fancies,' Sir Bolingbroke thinks as he trots along by the Knave's side, discoursing of the wind and the sun, the weather and the forthcoming banquet at Orleans House, the impossibility of existing in London an hour after 'one feels that the time to go has come,' and the miserable nothingness of a life that has to be lived away from London altogether. 'Let her nourish her fancies; they are intangibilities that will never interfere with my comfort; and the effort she makes at nursing them throws an enormous amount of expression into those seas of love and phantasy—her eyes.'

Accordingly, in fulfilment of his view of the case, Sir Bolingbroke sends sentiment to the right-about altogether this morning, and talks nothing but society to her.

'You'll be at Lady Beauton's to-morrow of course?' he half questions. 'St. Briac is to conquer the heiress of the year, Miss Millard, on his own ground—it's an understood thing: she goes for the title and his good looks, and he goes for all that "cotton" can procure him.'

'How very funny, and how very sad!' Daisy says sagely. 'You speak just as if Miss Millard were a bale of goods, and as if Lord St. Briac wouldn't have to live with her so long as they both do live, if they marry.'

'That doesn't always follow, Miss Eldon,' Sir Bolingbroke answers with (to his credit, be it said) a heightened colour.

'What doesn't always follow?' the Daisy asks, in innocent forgetfulness of the 'story' of Sir Bolingbroke and Lady Bray.

'Well, it doesn't always happen that people live together, "so long as they both do live," because they marry unadvisedly. Let me tell you—'

'No; tell me nothing,' Daisy interrupts. 'People shouldn't marry unadvisedly. We can all stay as we are if we can't marry the one we love; and if we marry the one we love, then it must be all right.'

'That's your theory,' he liars laughingly.

'That's what I believe, Sir Bolingbroke.'

'Well, my practice has been somewhat different; but I won't defile your ears by giving you a recital of the last Lady Bray's works. I have been a very badly-treated man, and I thought myself a blighted man, Miss Eldon, until I saw you; now I feel that I still have a motive in life, and that motive is to win you for my wife.'

He is a graceful, lissom, well-favoured young fellow, and he has a baronetcy and twenty thousand a year. Daisy remembers that he is, and that he has all these advantages, as she listens to him. Across her mind, too, as she listens, there flashes a vision of what Burnleigh life is and will be. But closely following on that vision there comes one of a gallant-looking, dark-eyed, sanguine-complexioned man, who has looked at her this day with a look to which her heart has beaten responsively, in a way that it has never beaten to the look of another man. And side by side with this remembrance there rises another—that of Sir Bolingbroke's sorely tried, sadly fallen, lost, unmentioned, and unmentionable wife.

Daisy is not a woman of the world yet. She does not understand that 'these things are,' but are not to be mentioned. So she

comes out with rather a hard rejoinder to his request.

'What an unworthy motive, Sir Bolingbroke! For your real wife is still alive, isn't she?'

'She is not my wife. Don't you understand that I have divorced her?'

'I don't understand anything of the sort; I only understand that what God has joined together man cannot put asunder. I am sorry for you, for I think you ought to live the rest of your life alone, and that thought is a sad one. Now, shall we go home?'

'I am to consider your answer a final one?'

'Yes, please,' she says simply; and then, as they come to the end of the Row, she puts her hand out to wish him good-bye, and says,

'No one will know of this from me, Sir Bolingbroke.'

'I don't care who knows that I have "loved the highest," though it's been my ill-fortune to have loved in vain,' he says, in a tone of such brave sincerity that Daisy's heart melts towards him, and her eyes beam such admiration for the manly candour with which he speaks of his disappointment, that he takes heart of grace, and determines to 'try her again' at some future day. 'Her head is a trifle turned by the success she has had,' he tells himself. 'When the season is over, and she has to face the parsonage and the poverty again, she'll take a more lenient view of my position.'

Meanwhile Daisy rides home with her head and heart in a whirl of delight at the unexpected *rencontre* she has had with her old friend Harry Poynter. By the time she gets into her aunt's presence she has forgotten all about Sir Bolingbroke Bray, and so she replies to Miss Bertram's anxious inquiry, 'Well, have you seen him?' with the words,

'Yes, aunt, and it has made me so happy; he's coming here to call to-morrow.'

'It's rather strange that he does not come to-day, I think,' Miss Bertram cries, embracing Daisy rapturously; 'my darling child, I am so pleased! The best match of the season! Twenty thousand a year and a title! They will admit down at Burnleigh that I have done well for my niece.'

'Are you thinking of Sir Bolingbroke?' Daisy stammers.

'Of course I am; of whom else can I—or you—be thinking?' Miss Bertram almost screams.

'I was thinking of my old friend Harry Poynter,' Daisy says, blushing and laughing. 'I told you when I came up first, if you remember, that the young Squire of Glenholme was coming back to live. O, didn't I mention it? I'm surprised at that, for I was thinking about him a great deal. He gave me Tartar. Well, this morning I saw him in the Row, and, O aunt Bertram, he has grown so handsome, and he looks so splendid and manly! He's coming to-morrow to call on you—'

'Have you seen Sir Bolingbroke?' Miss Bertram interrupted sternly.

'Yes.'

Daisy feels that she is going to be sharply cross-examined, and nerves herself to the task of baffling her aunt's curiosity and keeping her promise of 'not letting any one know' that she has rejected the baronet.

'You have seen him, and he has spoken to you? At least he went to the Row for that purpose this morning.'

'Yes, he spoke to me,' Daisy says innocently.

'And what have you said to him?'

'O, a number of things! I was in such high spirits at having seen

Harry that I talked more than usual, I think.'

'Do leave Harry, as you call him (I detest such familiarity between young men and women as exists in the present day) out of the conversation, and tell me, without further frivolity, how you and Sir Bolingbroke stand with regard to each other.'

'Very pleasantly, I believe,' Daisy says quietly. 'He told me about Lord St. Briac and Miss Millard: Lord St. Briac wants her money, Sir Bolingbroke says, and she wants the title. It's to be arranged to-morrow at Lady Beauton's dance. Are we going to it, aunt? Sir Bolingbroke asked me, and I couldn't tell him.'

'We are,' Miss Bertram says curtly. Then she sits in silence for a few minutes, feeling puzzled and disappointed. Sir Bolingbroke has evidently, she thinks, either failed to find an opportunity of wooing Daisy this morning, or failed to use it. No girl could resist avowing that she had received such a brilliant offer, if the offer had been made; at least ninety-nine girls out of a hundred

could not refrain from uttering the vaunt. However, it is just possible, she feels, that Daisy may be the exceptional hundredth. So she makes one more effort to discover exactly how things are.

'And that was all he said? You have nothing more to tell me?'

'Well, aunt, to tell the truth, I can't remember all he said. He spoke about St. Briac and Miss Millard—that I've told you; and we talked of Tartar; and he said how splendidly the Knave trotted. And so he does, aunt Bertram; there isn't another horse that comes near him as to pace or style of going.'

'Wasted his time talking about Tartar and the Knave, the great goose!' Miss Bertram thinks angrily, but she says aloud,

'Yes, Sir Bolingbroke is a good judge of horses, as he is of most things. The woman who is fortunate enough to win him will be the mistress of the best-appointed establishment in London;' and after saying this Miss Bertram does allow Sir Bolingbroke to drop out of the conversation.

MARINA.

WHERE the sea-winds mutter
And the sea-waves utter
Sounding dirges on the echoing shore,
Where the vocal leaflet
Sighs upon the reeflet,
There Marina slumbers evermore.

There the sea-witch moaning,
Times the sea-elf groaning,
And weird Echo pours her solemn roar,
Through the sea-cave broken,
Sprent with many a token,
Many a spoil from ocean's wizard store.

There, where dimly breaking,
From the sea-verge waking,
Samoa's peak the azure waste surveys,
There in sea-weed braided,
Deep in coral shaded,
Hidden, sleeps Marina from my gaze.

Far from Pity weeping,
Love his vigil keeping,
In the sea-urn mouldering in her bloom,
Sleeps the dark-eyed maiden,
Sleeps, while, sorrow laden,
Sad Remembrance wails above her tomb.

But though ruthless surges
Chant her only dirges,
And no signal points her place of doom ;
Though no mourner wailing,
But the white gull sailing,
Mourns her lustre quenched in endless gloom ;

Still, when evening glimmers,
And the crisp wave shimmers,
And thy brow, Samoa, purple dyes,
Pensive thought shall render
Votive offerings tender,
Breathing o'er her fate responsive sighs .

And the crested billow,
Beating round her pillow,
Elfin-winged the spirit-shades explore ;
And the gust awaking,
Through the death-locks breaking,
Oft unto my sight her beauteous shape restore.

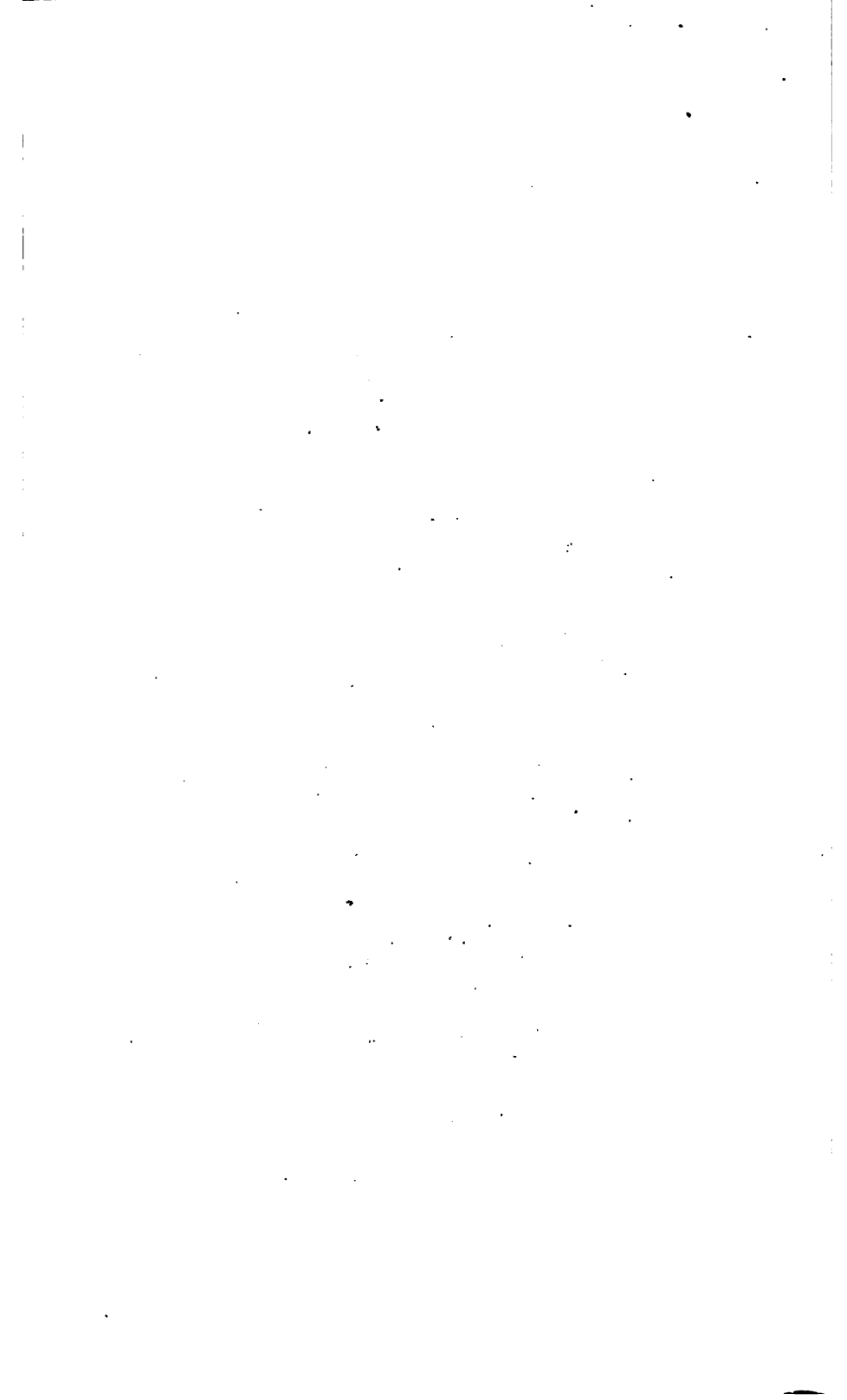
HECTOR A. STUART.

ALPINE ASCENTS AND ADVENTURES.*

MANY philanthropists, averse to the effusion of blood so long as 'peace with honour' can be preserved, yet share the opinion that there is one spectacle which is worse than that of a nation at war—that one spectacle being a nation so far lapsed from heroism into sloth and luxury as to be unfit or unable to go to war. Others are still troubled in their minds as to what will be a fitting and competent substitute for war, when war shall have ceased, as an educator in the chivalry of doing, daring, and self-sacrifice. Nationally, as Englishmen, we do not feel the pressure of the question. Our wars are not yet over; our temple of Janus is still open; and it is only in dreams that we are able to anticipate the closing of its portals. Yet apart from wars and the prospect of wars, we choose, even in the midst of wealth and the possibilities of inglorious ease, to endure and to suffer. From infancy we have a sort of instinctive faculty for seeking out pain as pain, and certainly as discipline; our childhood rejoices in that physical exertion and physical fatigue which it intuitively appreciates as an instrument of training; and our youth and manhood delight in the ardent and arduous excitement of the chase, the perilous pleasures of land and sea, the contests of the river and the plain, the splendid dangers of the mountain. It is in the aggregate of our sports

and voluntary exercises that as a people we still realise the spring-time and flower of our virility; and are bold and patient in the conviction that a nation of athletes must ever be a nation that holds in its grasp at least the potentiality of empire. 'That excitement,' says the author of the book before us, 'which is needed by the high-hearted English character and temperament is supplied, in part at least, in quiet days in which there are no noble wars, and but few chances of stirring adventure, by Alpine climbing. Hence the irresistible attraction of the fascinating pursuit of mountaineering to men of fine physique; to men of ardent, highly-organised, even of ideal, natures. The risk involved in first-class Alpine work is sufficient to lend to climbing the dignity of danger; and the poet may rejoice in the results of the feats which the athlete achieves. The mountaineer experiences the highest physical and temperamental joy of which the human frame is capable. Every nerve is excited, every muscle exercised, in attaining to, and traversing, the lofty Alpine peaks and passes. If the mountaineer be a poet, he feels besides, in his spiritual nature—and feels almost beyond the power of expression—that profound thrill of imaginative rapture which is born of rare and hardly-won contact with some of the noblest and most sublime scenes which exist in God's wonderful creation; and the memory of such high delight remains a

* *Alpine Ascents and Adventures; or Rock and Snow Sketches.* By H. Schütz Wilson. (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington.)



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DESCENT OF THE MATTERHORN.

See 'Alpine Ascents and Adventures.'

joy and a possession which lasts throughout, and which ennobles life.'

The writer of the foregoing extract, which is the second of the two paragraphs that form Mr. Wilson's 'Preface,' is no novice in mountain adventure. He speaks of the pleasures he has known, of the dangers he has encountered and overcome; and he wields the pen with as practised a hand as the Alpenstock. As an enthusiastic lover of the Alps and member of the Alpine Club, he has for some years past spent his annual holiday in surmounting some of the most picturesque and adventurous summits of Switzerland. The literary records and reminiscences of these vacations have already had a fugitive publication. 'The majority found acceptance in magazines, and one or two,' Mr. Wilson says, 'were included in my *Studies and Romances* and *Philip Mannington*. The whole are now collected into the present volume.' It is a book which the veteran Alpine climber will relish in winter as the angler does his 'Izaak Walton.' To the tyro and the possible aspirant to Alpine honours it is at once a charming and useful volume.

With these remarks we are fairly introduced to our author's work, which purports, in an alternative title, to be a collection of 'Rock and Snow Sketches.' As sketches their more picturesque passages may be transcribed almost abruptly; requiring little, on our part, of narrative connection or explanation. In introducing the following enthusiastic description of the kingdoms of the world, so far as they are seen from the great Mischabel-Dom, we need only premise that the Arthur of the text is Mr. Wilson's friend and companion, and that Christian

Lauener is the trusty and efficient guide.

"Leslie Stephen says," remarks Arthur, with appreciative ecstasy, "that this is the very finest view in the Alps. Let's see if he is right."

We think he is right.

The view is wonderful, past all whooping; beautiful beyond all description. See—those are the Italian lakes! What are those mountains with the huge level of snow spread out below them? Those, says Christian, are in Tyrol, and what looks like snow is really clouds. Those Alps there are the Dauphiné Alps, and that other mountain range is that of the Apennines. There's the Jura, and that—can it be?—yes, it is the Lake of Geneva! Look at the Oberland Giants: look at the Monte Rosa range! We seem to be above the Matterhorn, and are higher than the Weisshorn! You are, says Christian, on the highest peak in Switzerland, Mont Blanc (there he is—that's him) being in France, and Monte Rosa partly in Italy. What a sea, what a crowd of mountains—some snow-capped, some purple! What glaciers! What an awful spread of near purple heavens! It seems like judging the world only by its greatest men. We turn round and look on every side. Switzerland, Italy, France, and the Tyrol, are all visible in their glorious ranges of eternal hills. No cloud above: below there is cloud only on the Tyrol, and there the peaks soar through it. How wide the range of vision, how high we are, how hot the glowing sun, how keen the mountain air! We recognise peak after peak that we know; we salute those that we have climbed. Our talk is all exclamation, our feeling is all ecstasy. What glorious things there are in this wonderful world of ours! What sublimity, what beauty, what wonder! We are glad, are grateful; we think it is "good to be here." Thought and feeling are blent in a tumult of great joy and of awed wonder. As each separate object strikes us we utter fragmentary ejaculations of recognition and delight. Shall we ever be able to remember all that we saw there? We think not, but agree that we shall never forget that scene, that day; that we shall often recall it by London winter firesides, and shall perhaps never meet each other without a thought and a mention of the great Mischabel-Dom. When we have been there, as it seems to us, about ten minutes, Lauener, the inexorable, announces decisively that we must begin the descent, and hurries us unfeeling away. The slope from the peak downwards to the bottom of the pyramid looks very awful to go down; and so we find it. It looks to be an almost sheer descent. We plunge up to mid-leg in every deep hole made by a guide's step. We labour and flounder and slip. One slip, but for Christian, would have brought us to the bottom without much waste of time. The

snow was often deep and insecure; having fallen very recently, it was dazzlingly white. However, we did at length reach the bottom of the pyramid in safety, and paused to rest for a few moments on the brown rocks beneath.'

Our author's next excursion takes him to the summit of the Jungfrau, on which, with the guide of the foregoing extract, and another, but without the friendly Arthur, he is represented in a powerful illustration as sitting astride on what is a huge saddle of frozen snow.

'The summit is a small ridge of frozen snow, about as broad as a saddle, and falling sheer away on both sides like a very, very steep roof. Across this ridge we all sit down, having first smoothed the edge with the axe, with our feet hanging down on either side. Interlachen is on the north side, and the Aletsch glacier on the south. The day is superb, sunny, fairly warm, and wind-still. You cannot lie down, you must sit across your snow saddle, and you had better sit pretty firmly. The depth to the north is most impressive. The guides *jödel* down to Lauterbrunnen; and we drink our bottle of champagne. I light my pipe, and we sit astride this lofty crest to look upon the view that we have won.

The first feeling you have is that of being very high up. You seem lifted half-way to the near sky. Mentally also you are very near the heavens. The literal height is about 13,800 feet. The sense of triumph, the joy of conquest, the delight of being actually on the very summit of the renowned Jungfrau; the glory of the scene around—all things combine to raise you to a very ecstatic state of feeling. The sunny air is light, keen, exhilarating, and the great sky-arch above, around you is half awful in its immensity. It is found to be a little after 9 A.M., and we have consequently plenty of time. Let us look round. At this moment Byron's lines, in which he sings of the "never-trodden" snows of the Jungfrau, flashed across my memory. His description implies a prophecy, and as, sitting upon the summit, I thought of the splendid lines, I gloried in falsifying his prediction. If Shakespeare, looking merely from the cliffs at Dover, could feel how dizzy it was to cast one's eyes below, what would he have felt had he sat, as I was sitting, astride of the supreme crest of the "soaring Jungfrau"? If the fishermen that he saw from Dover cliffs appeared like mice, to what would he have compared the little dots of figures that we saw below in Lauterbrunnen.

One distinctive feature of the view from the Jungfrau is, that it comprehends men and human habitations to an extent which

no other peak view can surpass. Two miles below is Interlachen, clearly visible, like a toy heap of houses—that Interlachen from which I had so often gazed with longing and delight upon the noble peak on which at last I sat. To the left, and nearer to you, is the scattered village and deep valley of mountain-shadowed Lauterbrunnen.

Lauterbrunnen is Lauener's home, and he looks out eagerly for his cottage, and fancies that he can distinguish his wife. The nearest peak is the round snowy top of the Silberhorn. Seen from Mürren, the Silberhorn appears to be higher than the Jungfrau, but as we sit we see that it is hundreds of feet beneath us. The Jungfrau is one of the northernmost ranges of the Alps, and the view northward is therefore all green and purple, including forest, city, lake, and fading away afar off into Baden and Bavaria. The Jungfrau range looks northward over Germany, as the Monte Rosa range looks southward over Italy. Close to you are the giants of the Oberland, the Schreckhorn, the Eiger, the Mönch, the Finsteraarhorn. Splendour of God, what a name that is! "The Dark Eagle Peak,"—was ever mountain yet so grandly named? The Wetterhorn, the Blümlisalp, and all the peaks of that great pointed billowy sea, are there to right and left. Italy is shut out from the view by the great Monte Rosa range, but *that* is plainly visible beyond the long Aletsch glacier. There is the Matterhorn, there the Weisshorn, and that is the Mischabel-Dom. Altels, too, is seen, and the Aletschhorn is very near. To the north all is greenness; to the south, to east, and to west, all is snow and rock and mountain: on the one hand the world of sunny greenery, on the other the Alpine wintry world of ice and snow and peak. We had a superb day, and a view yet more superb. As one cannot linger long on the topmost pinnacles of "thoughts almost beyond the reaches of our souls," so one cannot remain very long on the loftiest mountain peaks: one is soon driven downward to the world in which our life of every day is possible. A long hour gone, Christian stood up to his full height, and after a loud parting *Jödel*, gave the word for the descent. The standing up on the summit's ridge was nervous work.'

The chapter from which this account of the Jungfrau is taken is entitled 'Two Sprigs of Edelweiss, or Sketches above the Snow-line,' the second moiety of which is devoted to an ascent of Monte Rosa. The next chapter, bearing the title of 'The Alps in Gladness,' by way of antithesis to the following one, as we shall see in the course of a few sen-

tences, leads us gradually, with preparatory descriptions of the Mönch Joch and the Wetterhorn, to the summit of that crowned monarch of mountains, Mont Blanc, which is reached by a climb of 15,800 feet.

'A perfect day for a view. The brightest of suns overhead; the finest of air around; but a wind cold, cruel, and intense.

And the view? Well, it is the noblest of all views from any mountain. Surely the view from Mont Blanc is the grandest sight on earth.

We stand together, an awe-struck, yet delighted, group, and Melk says the telescopes at Chamounix are watching us. On the top of Mont Blanc there is no sense of rivalry from any other peak; everything lies below you. You seem to see every peak, every pass: all the mountain ranges of Switzerland, the Tyrol, France, Italy. Before you, below you, behind you, on all sides—with nothing anywhere to intercept the prospect—you see that sublime ocean, fold after fold, range behind range, of mighty mountains. And you are so high up—you cannot be higher in Europe. Myriads of peaks are white, their eternal snows sun-smitten into brilliancy, or softened into tenderest shadow. Many have that rare velvety richness of colour composed of violet, of indigo, of purple, and of green; and behind one long low ridge, golden clouds, steadfast as if they formed a portion of the range, rest in a splendour of colour glory.

There are the sharp splinters of spire-like *aiguilles*, and there the suaver white hoods of snow summits.

There lies all Italy beneath you—that is, guides say, the Mediterranean, a dim blue streak, melting into tender haze of distance. There soars the crested Tyrol. There spreads France; and there, dimly suggested, is a suspicion of the land of the conquering Teuton. Lakes gleam like polished shields. Plains spread; woods are soft patches of gloom; cities are dwarfed, by the majesty of Nature, to miniature hints of man. The sight is bewildering! The glory is so great that only exclamations can express the rapture which is a feeling too vast to sunder into words. We identify each peak that we have conquered; we recognise every range we know.

But why attempt to catalogue the immensity of infinitude?

The view is grandest as a whole.

We have stood on many a summit, but on none so high as this. We feel sublimed. In this fine air, faith is easy. We have attained a spot so rare in its awful glory that it is kept remote, and is visitable but by few. O my God, I thank Thee that I live! It is worth having a

life which may soar once to the brief intense gladness of looking with joy-bright eyes upon a prospect so glorious that the mind is elevated to nearness to the Great Creator.'

The next chapter, or rather the second part of the same, bears the title of 'The Alps in Sadness,' and describes the 'Balmhorn accident' of August 1873, being a fall down a crevasse to the very extent of the connecting rope, which resulted in a severe contusion of the knee and other injuries which put an end to that year's climbing. We pass over the dreariness and disappointment of our author's deprivation, to rejoin him in the following year, 1874, in the more gay and gallant occupation of 'Mountaineering with Ladies.' The chapter in which we are introduced to so charming a subject takes the form mainly of a dramatic dialogue, the scene of which is the Monte Rosa Hotel at Zermatt. The interlocutors are Mr. Wilson, otherwise known as 'Fawn,' and his old friend Fitz-walker Scoresby, who, having confessed that Swiss mountaineering was in some way or other palling upon him, was recommended to renew his 'Alpine youth' by 'taking ladies on to glaciers.' Mr. Wilson, or Fawn, supports his argument by an appeal to his own experience of a very short time previously:

"This year we were at Conttêt's, at Chamounix. At dinner I had the good fortune to sit next to a very charming young lady, cultured, natural, sweet-natured. In the course of conversation it appeared that she had a strong secret ideal, a suppressed longing—a longing which she never dreamed of being able to gratify; and this latent longing was, to go up to the Grands Mulets, and to see something—seeing that something closely—of the great and wonderful ice-world. After dinner, my friend and myself consulted together, and the result was that we placed the whole resources of our establishment at Miranda's disposal. We offered to accompany her to the Grands Mulets, and to let her have the help of our guides, Melchior and Peter Anderegg. At first she could not believe that the offer

could be real—she could not realise the fact that her hidden ideal yearning was about to be realised. Incredulity, however, soon yielded to rapturous conviction; and you should have seen, Scoresby, the almost boundless delight with which she grasped the joy of the unexpected pleasure. It is not often in life that our hidden desires are suddenly realised for us. It did me good to see such keen, fresh, healthy ecstasy."

"I daresay. I should have liked to have seen that."

"A willing assent was soon obtained from her guardian; and our young lady was told that she must be up at three next morning. She gladly promised; and at half-past 8 A.M. we sat down to a breakfast, by candlelight, in the salon. The morning was still, dark, warm, and rather cloudy. By four we were fairly off, and were soon traversing in the dark the pine-woods at the beginning of the track. We presently got light enough to see by, and in three hours we reached the Pierre-Pointue hut. We had had an hour of rather heavy rain and hail, and we were pretty wet; though, luckily, Miranda had been well protected by a waterproof cloak. At the Pierre-Pointue we gave her an hour's rest and a second breakfast, and we dried ourselves as well as we could. We started again, and got to the beginning of the Glacier des Bossons, where, to our lady's singular contentment, she was regularly roped in orthodox mountaineer fashion. She was placed next to the great Melchior, who arranged two short loops of rope, one of which he held, while one of us had hold of the rear-loop. I lent her my snow-gaiters. And now you must fancy this fresh, impressionable, idealising nature treading for the first time a great glacier."

"I do fancy that," said Scoresby; "and I like the fancy. I wish I could have back again the feelings with which I first trod a glacier!"

"Her feelings were more intense than yours, depend upon it. She had never hoped to attain to such a glory. Everything was new and grand and wonderful to her. She was full of quiet modest rapture. She observed everything, and enjoyed unaffectedly. It was a joy to see her joy. I was looking into happiness through other eyes."

"Ah, now I see! But go on, old fellow."

"Melchior, I think, considers that ladies are rather out of place on a glacier; but our Miranda was so sweet, so docile, so very grateful to him for all his kindly care, that the great guide relaxed his theories in her favour, and became gently chivalrous towards a creature so modest, so happy, so good-humoured. We took the greatest care of her safety and comfort. We went at her pace, and helped her as much as possible. She went very cheerfully and pluckily and delightedly. As we passed under the base of the Aiguille

du Midi, an avalanche descended just above us. We were quite safe; but the hissing, smoking, rushing body of snow and ice came down near to us; and you can imagine the awed delight with which our fair friend regarded this grand Alpine spectacle. I never knew that glacier so troublesome, or the crevasses in such bad order. The day was cloudy, and rain threatened always, and now and then fell. There are this year two great ladders over bad places on the glacier—one lying flatly down across a wide deep chasm, and the other standing pretty straight up over a narrow, very deep abyss. When I went up Mont Blanc there were no ladders."

"None when I was there last," observed Scoresby.

"The seracs were somewhat difficult, too; and we had, of course, to jump crevasses, and to leap across chasms. The snow-slopes were long, and the snow was only moderately good; but still our fair and pleasant companion went ever cheerfully on, and, with Melchior's good help and our little assistance, she surmounted all the difficulties very bravely and well. At last the dark rocks of the Grands Mulets rose steeply out of the white snow wastes; and Miranda's wonder was greatly excited by the huge ice pinnacles below to the left, which, a little darker only than the light-gray sky, towered up from out the wide glacier surface. Courage! one effort more; this is the last slope. And now we leave the snow, and stand really upon the rocks of the actual Grands Mulets!"

"How long did you take getting her there?"

"O, about five hours and a half actual walking. She went well, and Melchior cut such good steps. At the Grands Mulets we had leisure to observe the wonder-world, and our pocket-book was soon being filled with happy details. Before her were those vast snow-fields, seamed with many a giant chasm and crevasse. Opposite were the Aiguille du Gouté, and, a little to the left, the Dôme du Gouté, the Bosse, and then, wonder of wonders! the actual calotte of great Mont Blanc. We pointed out everything to her, and she enjoyed all unspeakably, with fresh intelligent ecstasy. She found out how enormous the difference was between gazing upward from Chamounix and looking closely from the Grands Mulets rocks upon the vast snow world of plain and slope and mountain. We had brought up for her a pot of Fortnum & Mason's jugged hare, and Melchior prepared a very nice little repast. We had plenty of champagne; and when all was ready we went into the hut and had a most enjoyable lunch. We afterwards brought out a chair for her, and then we sat by her, taking tobacco, and telling her all that we thought would interest her about glacier and snow-slope and mountain peak. We kept her there two good hours, in order that she might get a thorough

rest; and when Melchior announced that if she wanted to be down at Chamounix by *table-d'hôte*, we had better start, she sighed for the first time on that, to her, most memorable day."

"How did you get her down?"

"O, pretty well, I think. Melchior was behind her, and took great care. The slopes were a little steep and soft, and she did not, of course, know how to tread; but Melchior had cautioned her that she would have at least a dozen falls, and that not one of them would matter; so that she was not afraid. She went very well. We managed the ladders, the crevasses, the ice, and reached Pierre-Pointue, where we rested her for another hour, and made her a claret-cup."

"A real claret-cup?"

"Yes; and a very good one: curaçao, lemon, and plenty of ice. It was really very good. Then all difficulties were over, and we came easily down to Contât's, getting there about six."

"Our young lady (who had been out fourteen hours) was simply radiant with triumph and delight; and it was a sight to see her rush into her uncle's arms, and try to tell him something of her happiness. I know I had enjoyed the expedition immensely; better, perhaps, than I might have enjoyed, looking into Alpine happiness only through my own eyes. I had done that often enough, but I had never before seen the Alps through the fresh, pure, emotional enthusiasm of a woman's mind."

"I think it worth consideration whether one may not re-live one's Alpine youth by taking young ladies—I mean nice intelligent ones—on to glaciers. It's quite an invention of yours, Fawn. Was that a solitary instance? If you have any other case, I shall be happy to hear it."

Scoresby heard the case of the second lady Alp-climber with interest and benefit; but it is not necessary to reproduce it at length to the reader. We may, however, select a passage towards the end of the chapter, in which narrative passes philanthropically and chivalrously into the didactic.

"To a man it is easy (if he can do the work) to see the high Alps; but to a woman such things seem, and often are, unattainable, unless chance provide an opportunity of being taken into the wild wonderland. And yet some women long intensely, if stealthily, to see these glorious sights; their natures contain a suppressed dreamy romance of imaginative yearning towards the eternal hills."

"Women often walk surprisingly well, because mental and nervous excitement uplift them above the unwonted labour. This fact is a part of their fine organisa-

tion, which qualifies them to enjoy highly and holily. I like to see the human eye dilate with wonder and great joy; I like to watch the silent raptures which indicate a receptive mind, a distended imagination. In short, I joyed in the joy of the two young ladies that I had the pleasure of accompanying this year to the Grands Mulets and up the Gorner glacier. I say to you, Scoresby, go and do likewise; get an Alpine alternative; renew your waning mountain youth; perform the mechanism of climbing with newer joy, because you may be the means of procuring for a lady a rare delight, to which she could not otherwise attain. There, I began with a narrative and I have finished with a lecture; but I did want to show you the great pleasure that may be obtained with ladies in the Alps."

One of Mr. Wilson's chapters is entitled 'A Protruding Tooth,' the English equivalent for the 'delightful Fletschhorn, which rears itself so loftily in that most beautiful site between the Simplon and fair Saas.' In this chapter Mr. Wilson shortly describes his singular good fortune in witnessing the glory of the Alpengluth.

'On one occasion during the season I saw the rare and memorable spectacle of the unspeakably beautiful Alpengluth, or Alpine glow. The sun had set, the chill light of evening was just beginning to render cold and stern the whiteness of snow and the darkness of rocks, when I was descending a pass, walking and talking with Melchior Anderegg. Suddenly we both stopped. That magic mystery of colour-light glowed on the snow and flushed upon the rocks. The warm red-rose tint suffused air and light, and all things stood idealised in the unearthly witchery of fairy hues and tones. This phenomenon is only rarely seen, but when it does occur it is one of the loveliest phases of Nature streaming love upon her Alps. It faded slowly out of earth and sky, and we resumed our walk with a blank sense of the cessation of an enchantment. It was as if ravishing music ceased, and left the dull air void and empty of charm. An illusion died away, and rock-horn and snow-peak looked forlorn, heartless, repellent. "I think I have only once before seen the Alpengluth so beautiful as that," said Melchior thoughtfully. The great guide has a true susceptibility to the wonders of Nature and to the glories of his Alpine world. He sighed as the vision was withdrawn, and his mind avenged itself for its sense of loss by swinging onwards at a tremendous pace. We walked away from the spot with eyes bent upon the ground.'

After recording his failure to achieve the ascent of that 'Fine Pair of Horns, the Weisshorn and the Matterhorn,' and his successful wrestling in 'laborious intimacy' with that 'Peak of Terror, the Schreckhorn,' which Mr. Leslie Stephen calls 'the grim-mest fiend of the Oberland,' he attempts once more, and this time happily, to conquer the summit of the Matterhorn.

'I did not have a "good view" from the Matterhorn. But that matters little. I have seen fine unclouded views from many a peak, but to this peak belong fitly storm and war of elements. Clouds here do not "pause to repose themselves in passing by." There is no repose possible on this wild peak, that loves best an active struggle with the storm-fiends. "And a mighty tempest shall be stirred up round about him." Tempest has its own deep beauty in its fitting home. The mystery of dread latent force is better felt in such weather. The mountain is grander in the flying gleams of strange lights, and fantastic cloud-forms, and hovering glooms. Silent silver lights rest for a brief instant on the chill of snow and on the dark of rock. Storm lends a noble mystery undreamed of in calm or sunny hours. I rejoice that my short experience of the summit of the Matterhorn was one of grandest tempest and of lowering heavens.'

The following is a suggestive incident of the return from the ascent of the Matterhorn, telling retrospectively of a danger the aggravated circumstances of which had been unknown at the time of the crisis by the parties most intimately concerned :

'Near the Hörnli and the Schwarzsee we met with one or two parties making short excursions from Zermatt. They stared at the battered weather-stained men coming off the Matterhorn, and some stopped us to ask questions about the wizard mount. Running down the grass slopes near Zermatt, we met a little procession, composed chiefly of women. These accosted my guides with great emotion, with kisses and warm hand-shakings. As they spoke very fast, and in *patois*, I did not at first understand their meaning; but Moser soon explained. Between cloud openings we had been seen on the most dangerous part of the mountain; and at that moment a small snow ava-

lanche fell down the northern face. We were swallowed up in an instant in mist and lost to sight. They thought that we had fallen, and were rejoiced to see the two guides return safely. Soon comes the door of the dear old Monte Rosa Hotel. Sending Moser on to order a bath, I changed my garments, and then turned to look upon the Matterhorn *victus*. He was shrouded in cloud and storm; but I knew where he was, and every step upon him was photographed in memory. It was a little after one when we reached Zermatt. Madame Seiler was pleased to receive the strip of her son's flag; the hotel soon made up for scant sustenance by a capital lunch; and the society of pleasant friends relieved the mind from that feeling of loneliness and awe which the grim and ghastly giant evokes. The Matterhorn lay behind me—vanquished!

It is curious to notice the vastly different impression made by the Matterhorn upon unimaginative and imaginative natures. To the boor it is barren; to the poet it is fertile. To a climber of the Hawley Scrowger school, a climber who works with the legs only, and ascends without heart or brain, without intellect or fancy, the Matterhorn is simply a more or less difficult piece of rock-work: to a mountaineer of the Norman Franklin type, the mountaineer who adds the soul of the poet to the power of the athlete, the Matterhorn is a sublime if awful revelation of that which is mysterious and terrible in Nature. To such a man it is a loadstone mountain, irresistibly attractive. It is a fascinating fiend—it is, in a word—THE MATTERHORN! * * *

Something of the old romance of mountaineering is fading out before the rise of the new school of unfledged novices who, without judgment, knowledge, mastery of the craft, do not climb, but are, so soon as they reach Switzerland, taken or dragged up hills, which—in the true mountaineering sense—they could not ascend. Sometimes such men are pulled up to the top; oftentimes they fail. Not seldom there may be amongst these novices men who, with time and study, would ripen into good mountaineers. Swiss hotels are being multiplied, and tourists increase; many causes combine to lessen the romance of earlier times, but, whatever influences may tend to lower somewhat the rare old charm of Swiss mountains, their vital magic remains wholly indestructible. No number of voyages over the trackless paths of ocean can vulgarise the mighty sea; and no number of unidea'd or unideal tourists—of climbers who cannot climb—can ever ruin, in the imagination of the true mountaineer, the wonder, the mystery, the glory, of our still unspoiled because unspoilable HIGH ALPS.'

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

ANSWER TO No. X. (TRIPLE ACROSTIC).

1. G O L D F I N C H
2. O D E R I C O
3. N E O L O G I S M
4. E X A M P L E

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abacus, Abelard, Aces, Acipenser, Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Arno, Beatrice W., Bon Gualtier, Brief, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cerberus, Chinese Feet, Clarice, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Der Hund, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, Excelsior-Jack, Frau Clebsch, General Buncombe, Gnat, Gogledd Cymru, G. U. E., Hampton Courtier, Hazlewood, H. B., Hibernicus, Incoherent, Jessica, Kanitbeko, L. B., Manus O'Toole, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Murra, Non sine gloria, Patty Probity, Pud, Racer, Respice finem, Reynard, Roe, Shaitân, Smashjavelin, Sootie, Spes, The Borogoves, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Toby, Try, Verulam, Welsh Rabbit, and Yours truly—63 correct, and 12 incorrect: 75 in all.

Coup d'Essai is credited with a correct answer to No. IX.

No. XI.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

Apropos to the beginning of September,
 Such a man as this you very seldom meet.
 He had virtues far too many to remember,
 And would even give to beggars in the street.

I.

These three were ducklings, though it may seem droll—
 Red and white ducklings, shaken in a bowl.

II.

Granted 'tis neither here nor there,
 It certainly must be elsewhere.

III.

Thence rose of old the pious strain
 Amid the melancholy main.

IV.

To please her unprincipled greedy old father,
 She showed her poor lover, a poet, the door,
 The heartless young jilt, feeling sure she would rather
 Be wed to a new love with money galore.
 But the poet, although he might be impecunious,
 In satire was rich, and lampooned them each day
 In the flay-alive style of the Letters of Junius,
 Till they hung themselves, just to get out of his way.

V.

These are but seven, yet of yore
 Between a dozen and a score.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the October Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by September the 10th.

LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XXV.

A BATTUE.

ELISE, on the whole, felt inclined to a lazy satisfaction with the result of her first fortnight's manœuvres. Alec, for his part, stayed on at his post, like some one on probation, and Lady Molly, for hers, had not dismissed him. The girl was enjoying her visit—seemed, if possible, almost too uniformly happy and frank spirited. 'I should like to shake her sometimes,' thought Elise, provoked and baffled by the sameness of her demeanour—that well-regulated affability and gay good-humour, the same to Joe, to Alec, to her godmother, to Lefroy. One might have thought it constitutional, but for a decided touch of chilly, supercilious distance creeping into her manner towards Cressida, who was only too quick to perceive and resent it.

The pending marriage seemed to her rather marvellous. There was no doubt, as Joe observed, that it would be A1 for Alec. 'She's a good, sensible girl,' quoth Mr. Kennedy; 'no humbug about her at all. And he? Well, he's been a bit fast; but she could reform him if anybody could. I

wonder if she'll make up her mind to him?'

So far, whatever she felt, she remained outwardly cold and *insouciant*. Just as Alec was courteously attentive merely, so she was courteously receptive and nothing more. All had been smooth, steady sailing; but they had not got far. The two were getting to know each other, however, by degrees, and Elise upon due observation concluded that if the degrees were slow, it was because Alec, very naturally, wished to make pretty sure of his position before declaring himself openly.

If there was one thing that Joe delighted in more than another it was doing the honours of the farm to particular friends who came and petitioned for a private view. Lady Molly Carroll had gone up many steps in his estimation by expressing a desire to make its acquaintance, and she rose higher still when on the day appointed she appeared, with Alec in attendance, to claim the fulfilment of the promise. For as Joe, at great leisure, marshalled his party over the stables and cowsheds, hen-house, kennels, dairy, and offices various, her satisfaction knew no bounds. On her side, there was

nothing she more honestly enjoyed than time thus innocently spent. Her animal spirits found vent like a child's—in little romps. For her there was infinite fun in poking the black pigs with her umbrella, chasing the fowls round the yard, and discoursing with the turkey-cock in his native hobble-gobble. About the idiosyncrasies of horses and hounds she showed herself equally interested and equally knowing; and during the two hours that their inspection lasted was perfectly happy and in her glory—as it were rehearsing for days not far off, when she should reign somewhere as queen of the soil, and would, like one to the manner born; in contrast to poor Cressida, who, in spite of her late apprenticeship, was always betraying her lamentable want of aptitude in certain matters, remaining there, as she ever would, an amateur of amateurs.

But the climax of the entertainment, reserved by Joe till the last, was of course the rat-hunt. It came off in a part of the kitchen-garden, adjoining the henhouse, where sad depredations had been committed. Hither the dogs and ferrets were brought, and then began that sport, unique of its kind, which exercises so mysterious a fascination over the minds of sinful men. A little crowd, like birds attracted to a quarry, were soon gathered together, watching intently round the spot. Farm-labourers, gardeners, and boys left their work and hovered at a respectful distance, sheerly unable to keep away. Joe stood motionless, as deeply rapt as a mathematician sunk in a problem; Lady Molly beside him, also intent, but less quiescent, her excitement bubbling over in little half-suppressed shrieks and starts and quivers of delight. Alec was transfixed like the rest. The

colony of rodents was supposed to be numerous. The hunters might look forward to some rare sport.

Cressida, who was wanting in predatory instincts of the kind, kept a little farther off. At the sight of the three figures before her—all so stock-still, serious, and absorbed—she began to laugh irresistibly. Out of politeness to her guests she had accompanied them to the scene of action, stood by whilst the ferrets were being brought on in their sack; but for the spectacle in itself she had a distinct aversion, and meant to keep clear of it.

'I'm going to feed the pigeons,' she said presently aloud; 'perhaps you will join me there when all this is over.'

'Hush, hush!' came imploringly from the trio. So engrossed were they that merely the sound of her speech reached her ears. Only Alec—and even he tore his eyes off the objects before him with a grievous effort—turned, and said to her as she was moving away,

'Doesn't this amuse you, Mrs. Kennedy?'

'No; it's very stupid of me, but I never in my life could look on at a rat-hunt. I can't bear rats, but I think I dislike ferrets even worse, and the chain of destruction most of all. I'm going over there to my pigeons.'

The noiseless sport proceeded without her. More witnesses collected, the interest deepened. One victim after another had fallen; the innocents were avenged; the surviving poultry safe for the present. But there was a suspected haystack hard by, which was to be the next theatre of operations. As the party moved on to take up their fresh position, Alec glanced round to see what had become of Cressida. There she stood in the middle of the garden behind them. She had come out of the house

with a quantity of Indian corn, and the pigeons were flocking down from the dovecot and thronging round her. They fluttered at her feet, clung to her dress, perched on her shoulder, her wrist, her head, she feeding and coaxing them playfully. It was so pretty a picture that it overcame even the fascinations of that haystack. Turning his back with a sigh on the destroyers, and at a critical juncture, De Saumarez moved silently away, and came slowly across the garden to join her.

'Now you don't mean to say that you are actually getting tired of the rat-hunt?' she asked rallying, as he approached. 'I confess that for my part it always seems to me a most solemn amusement. But I'm insensible to its peculiar attraction.'

'You lose a pleasure,' said Alec, with gravity.

'So I see,' and she cast a glance in the direction of the haystack, where the second round of sport seemed to be surpassing the first in interest; 'and I assure you I appreciate this sacrifice to politeness on your part. I feel properly flattered.'

'How sarcastic you are!' he said, in a tone of complaint; 'why are you always laughing at me now?'

'Am I? I didn't know,' said Cressida provokingly; 'but I think it must be because you always look so melancholy now; and that usually makes me laugh, I must tell you.'

Alec's eyes turned significantly to the distant figure of Lady Molly, and he said meditatively,

'Isn't it the proper thing for a man in love to look melancholy? I, at least, always thought that was the right way, and that, generally speaking, there was no real chance for you unless you

could contrive to grow pallid and forlorn, so that when at last you said, "Love me or I die," you might look it too. Otherwise no young lady now would believe you.'

Cressida, stroking the bird she was feeding, replied,

'Well, I think if looking grave could do it, you might rely upon success, certainly.'

'You say that in order to cheer me up.'

'Of course.'

'You forget that if I did feel confident about it,' he remarked, 'the first effect might perhaps be to make me more melancholy still.'

'Now why?' she asked, fondling her pet dove, and tempting it to come and peck grains of corn from between her lips. Alec watched the process admiringly; but her attention was entirely bestowed upon her flock of favourites, some of whom were inclined to fight for her preference; she merely looked at him carelessly now and then.

It seemed to Cressida as if she and Alec could never talk together for five minutes without drifting into treacherous common-or-uncommon-places. It was like a strange fatality determining the tone of their conversations. Both had the turn and the taste for gliding gracefully, lightly, and skilfully over treacherous ground, like skaters on thin ice. In all this was an attraction such as that of the most perilous pastimes for accomplished players. Alec had ceased to feel even a lingering regret for the scene of slaughter deserted.

'You ought to recollect,' he said presently, 'that I am a wild, unaccountable sort of bird, and have never been put into a cage yet. The idea of it makes one feel very grave. I'll confess so much to you.'

'Who wants to put you into a

cage?' said Cressida, laughing to herself; 'I should hope that bars and bolts wouldn't be necessary. Look here, pray observe my pigeons. They aren't shut up in a cage—are you now?' she added, addressing herself to some half dozen that had come fluttering upon her, and she caressed them prettily.

'And yet they don't seem to care to fly away from home,' rejoined Alec thoughtfully; 'but I suppose you take care of that.'

'Take a lesson from them—'

'I should like to,' he put in parenthetically, fixing his eyes obediently on the particular bird she was favouring with her attention.

'In quiet tastes, home-likings, and contentment in general,' she concluded, with a laugh.

But there were swallows darting about not far off, sweeping aimlessly through the air hither and thither with the restless, uneasy flight of those untameable creatures when the hour of migration is drawing near. Unconsciously both now were watching the swift fliers.

'Those birds are more of your feather, I fear,' said Cressida presently; 'they are never satisfied, but must always be off on their voyages of discovery.'

'Do you mean to say you have never felt with them?'

'O, very often. There are times when I feel I should like to be a swallow, fly off into another sky, another air, another world,' she concluded dreamily.

'Algeria,' suggested Alec prosaically.

'Wherever one's wings would carry one, if one had them.'

There was a pause, during which Cressida, having disposed of all the meal she had brought out with her, was being rapidly deserted by the faithless flock. One

by one they made use of their wings to get away from her, and clustered again on the dovecot. When the last had flown off she turned and retraced her steps slowly down the garden-walk towards the group by the haystacks, Alec accompanying her.

'You never go abroad, I suppose,' he observed carelessly.

'It is not so long since we returned from our travels, you know,' she replied, 'but I fancy that first year will have to last me a long, long time. It will become more and more difficult to get away, and at last, perhaps, one will not care to do so.'

'But you are going to take that trip to Paris with us in the autumn, if it comes off, are you not?'

'Are we indeed?' said Cressida, laughing; 'this is the first I have heard of it.'

'O, then I suppose I mistook—dreamt it, perhaps. Only my mother was talking over the plan with me, and I fancied she had said something about hoping to persuade you into it. You should come; it would be worth while. If it's fine weather I want to have the yacht out, and we might take a run over from Southampton.'

It was the first time the idea had suggested itself to Cressida, or in point of fact to Alec. She made some vague reply. They were approaching the haystacks, arriving just in time to be in at the death—a sensational finale to the sport.

'A whole nest of them!' exclaimed Lady Molly, turning round to the deserters as they approached, with glee and exultation in her countenance; 'how many does that make altogether, Mr. Kennedy?' added the fair huntress.

'Forty odd,' ejaculated Joe, with indescribable solemnity of emphasis.

The work of extirpation, root

and branch, now thoroughly achieved, the spell was broken. Joe and Lady Molly had woken up as out of a trance. It was growing late, and Mrs. de Saumarez's carriage was stopping the way; she had called to take off her young people.

Alec was more than usually attentive that evening to Lady Molly, who on her part was more than usually reserved. She piqued him by one or two careless chilly little speeches. Lady Molly, though no coquette, was not a cipher by any means, nor fitted to be any one's dupe. She had it in her to feel a certain repulsion towards Cressida, whose attraction she was coming more fully to perceive and acknowledge, whilst more vehemently resenting its working in almost any shape. Married women had no business to be attractive, certainly not to that extent.

She had her eyes wide open, and unconsciously regarded the present contingency as a test, something that might speedily turn the scale against Alec, making her secretly regret that she should ever have given the faintest encouragement to such a man—a man so weak and irresolute that he could thus dangle foolishly in the train of the first pretty silly woman he came across. For the next few weeks, that were to bring the proof, Lady Molly was on the *qui vive*, as she had never been in her life, for little subtleties and under-play, ever ready to detect the slightest defalcation on the part of her ostensible suitor, and mete out to it the measure it deserved.

Alec knew his own ground perfectly, and that it was most insecure. Nor did this natural pride in the girl tend to alienate him. It was quite the right thing in her, he felt, but it enforced upon him an amount of self-denial and watchfulness to which he was not

accustomed. Woe to him if he suffer the sentiments—whatever these may be—that he entertains for Mrs. Kennedy,—that far more infatuating person than Cressida Landon,—to make him remiss for an instant in showing attention where attention is due!

He had come down with his own intentions as fixed as an incorrigibly shifty habit of mind permitted, and just sufficiently uncertain as to his success, to make him the keener upon it. There was no danger of his forgetting the positive advantages to himself of such an alliance; besides, he must admire the girl. To let a foolish remnant of a miscarried passion distract him from his main interests, to fall back on the past, and so forget himself in looking on the reflection of what he had lost as to let slip what he might have made his own, would be, in his philosophy, to render himself supremely ridiculous. He had no taste for blowing soap-bubbles. To cultivate a dream, a barren sentiment, abandoning what was within easy reach, to be made a double fool of for his pains, was not his way.

Thus, when now and then his mind seemed to become chaotic, the immediate effect was to make him more punctilious, nay, rush into a more pronounced show of admiration for this cold, fair, Dian-like girl who might yet be his bride.

What though the Cressida that he had known two years ago were but a slight sketch beside the Cressida of to-day? (it seemed so to him at least, whether it were that memory had grown faint or she become really more beguiling.) What though at times, as to-night, he caught himself calling up a bright look, a playful word, a pretty movement of hers, and dwelling upon it with a kind of

passion of appropriation? All this must be kept under, kept to himself at least.

Only he was always letting his mind dwell on the fact that she was restless, thoroughly dissatisfied, and unhappy. The cause he did not trouble to ask himself twice. What happiness—in Alec's sense of the word—could she have found in a marriage of that sort? It might be worldly-wise and prudent, but was otherwise unmeaning. Love on her side? Alec laughed. 'Lout!' With which monosyllable he classified and dismissed the 'good fellow' she had chosen to marry.

He was pretty constantly at the farm, but almost invariably with Lady Molly. He had numerous talks with Cressida, but so had Lady Molly with Joe. Alec soon observed that, talking with him, Cressida's sadness and listlessness were apt to vanish. He had the art of charming them away, of making her forget for a time the shadows that possessed her—a discovery that charmed *him* particularly.

Cressida had first undergone his society as inevitable, next tolerated it as agreeable, and lastly was coming to look forward to it as a solace and excitement, when nothing else would soothe or exhilarate her.

Now and then the temptation to wreak an inglorious woman's vengeance on Lady Molly for her occasional rudeness and perpetual *hauteur* had proved too strong for her discretion, and got Alec into serious disgrace with Lady Molly, neglected for an hour perhaps; but all this would have been insignificant but for a growing liking for Alec's admiration for its own sake, and his subtle ways of expressing it, a silent tribute written in sympathetic ink, and intelligible to her alone.

It did deaden her self-reproach, mesmerise her trouble and uneasiness, and make her feel gay and happy, whilst he was there. He could follow her thoughts and feelings too, forestall them sometimes with a delightful rapidity that denoted a certain resemblance of spirit or very quick apprehension, or both. How many men can keep pace with women's thoughts? Those who do have an incalculable advantage. It was long since Cressida had experienced anything so pleasant of its kind, so enticing to the spirit, as this intercourse.

The worst of it was that it made the rest of her life seem mechanical. Now and then the consciousness crossed her unpleasantly—like some mysterious passing premonition of a fatal illness—that her daily routine, her home avocations, cares, interests, duties, were shrinking into an unnatural insignificance. The dinner-party at Monks' Orchard, the riding or driving excursion, and occasions various on which, appearances notwithstanding, she knew herself the main attraction for one of their circle, seemed to have assumed an importance equally unnatural, and which they surely contained for no other.

Sometimes her vision cleared for a moment, and she felt shocked and dismayed that such vain and insidious moods should thus gain even a passing hold on her, and she would go forth full of admirable resolutions, bent on heroic endeavour. Then Lady Molly would come rushing in *sans cérémonie*, with her peculiarly provoking way of saying 'Mrs. Kennedy,' giving herself little airs, invisible to Joe, who when Cressida broke out to him on the subject now and then, always defended her stanchly; in fact to

him she was vastly more polite, a distinction that only enhanced the shade of arrogance in her manner to his wife. Then Joe would be called upon to fulfil a promise to take her to see his tame pheasants, so off they must go to the coops in the rain. And she would order Alec about, and he would obey, and Cressida feel rather neglected, as they went tramping round the muddy farmyard. Lady Molly was nearly indefatigable, and accustomed to be out in all weathers. Then they would return to tea, and the young lady, with an air as of one taking possession, would go turning over the objects in the sitting-room with her finger-tips, with the naive inconsiderate bearing that distinguished her—half-princess, half-hoyden as she was. Joe would burst into fits of laughter over her comments; it was to him her notes and queries were usually addressed. And Alec would be watching for the shade to come over Cressida's face, quick to detect it when it came, and a look that brought him to her side at once. Molly had carried off Joe into the kitchen, where they were feeding the dogs, a noisy process; Cressida had taken up a book in despair.

'It is you who are looking melancholy now,' remarked Alec, to a running accompaniment of barking and laughter outside.

'Am I?' said Cressida, without raising her eyes from her book; 'it must be the melancholy verses I was reading. I always read poetry to Joe in the evenings.'

And Joe goes to sleep. But this detail she omitted.

'Show me,' said Alec, taking the volume from her hand; and turning to another page at random he began reading aloud, till Cressida stopped him, and in spite of his remonstrances took the book

forcibly out of his hands and shut it.

He was laughing, but she had turned away with a flush and a little twinge of heart. The first was for Alec, the second was not. It was merely that the verses read out, as he had read them, with point and emphasis, had stirred in her afresh those vain regrets and vain desires for sympathy and response to thoughts and sentiments of which, if you are not fortunate enough to find an echo in the live minds of those around you, you must be content with their duller and more distant reflection in print.

Every day as Alec's irresolution threatened more serious consequences he felt the greater disinclination to put an end to it in the way desired by everybody, by himself at first.

Was he hanging back, looking askance, coldly, slackly at a marriage which if arrangeable would, as he had proved to himself over and over again, leave him the gainer in an incalculable degree? He would live the happier, the richer, the better, and probably the longer. O, it was a glorious investment for the remainder of his span, and could compare in the long-run with no other.

But when in all his life had Alec de Saumarez let himself be scared, by any distant lions in the way, off a path where he saw the flowers growing that he liked? Had he turned his back on the gaming-table because of the probably unfavourable consequences to his exchequer in the long-run? Had he shrunk from extravagances various for fear of eventual damage to his general prosperity or his self-respect? Had he been deterred from breaking vows or getting others to break them for fear of the broken hearts or heads that might ensue? To be guided

by distant considerations under present circumstances would be to revolutionise the whole of his life's practical philosophy. Those who expect him so to do without effort or hesitation ask a miracle. Should he ever see or think to see before him a splendid chance of breaking the bank, is he likelier to stake his lighter winnings or to retire upon them? To hold back would be to act in large as he has never acted in small.

Of all these waverings and cross-purposes of heart and head there was little to be discerned outwardly. Those concerned were the likeliest to be self-deceived. There was one who saw things more clearly; an outsider, who, if he had neither part nor lot in that coterie any more, had lingered hitherto as a looker-on, unwilling to break away, for all the vexation of spirit he was secretly enduring. But one evening Lewis Lefroy surprised Elise by giving sudden notice of his departure; or rather—seeing that he had been talking of going for a month—by evincing a sudden but unmistakable obstinacy in his intent. He said he must go. He was thinking of leaving England, to travel for two years or so.

'Really!' said Elise, contemplating his face and the new-born determination it expressed with good-humoured curiosity. 'Has some one left you a legacy? Or perhaps you are going to be married, and this is your wedding tour?'

Neither, it appeared. He proceeded with a humorous explanation. An old and wealthy American lady of his acquaintance had, he related, engaged him to accompany her and her daughter on a tour half over Europe!

'As courier,' asked Elise facetiously, 'or son-in-law elect?'

Neither one nor the other, he

assured her. He was going in his professional artistic capacity. The lady, he affirmed gravely, was quite mad, and incredibly lavish in her patronage. They were rather vulgar people, he went on to confide to her, who ran after art and artists as a byway through which it is sometimes possible to smuggle into the outskirts of good society, sometimes beyond. Thus they had bought statues and pictures by crack artists, and set them up in their house as a bait to lure well-bred people and distinguished foreigners to their entertainments. It had answered rather well out there. Her last whim was, it appeared, to have an artist at her orders, to travel about with her, and paint according as she should require, copy for her any *chef-d'œuvre* she should wish to carry off to the Far West, where perhaps, he said, laughing, with the unsophisticated, who knows but it might pass for an original! She had made a similar offer to him before, a year ago, but he had then declined, as he expressed it, to go scouring over Europe with an adventuress, fabricating old masters at his own terms. But the proposal had been repeated, and this time he had jumped to the conclusion it was too good to be let slip.

Elise looked at him a little doubtfully. She had thought he was joking at first, but was beginning to perceive her mistake.

'One is always making interesting discoveries about one's intimate friends,' she said amiably. 'I thought I knew you, yet I should have imagined this would be the last thing to suit your taste.'

'Why not?' he objected, laughing. 'Fresh woods and pastures new, you know. I always set the highest value upon them!'

'Yes, but I thought you stipu-

lated for enjoying them in your own manner, and in the company of cultivated minds,' she hinted gently.

He gravely called upon her to consider the undoubted profit for himself to be derived from the scheme. He might make any amount of money and not work harder than he liked. He would see the world, come in for many amusing adventures, collect an inexhaustible stock of anecdotes, and make his eccentric benefactress and her daughter the laughing-stock of everybody he knew for ever after. All the while he would be in clover, and if he got tired of it need not scruple to throw them over at any time. That, however, was not what he meant to do until he had got all he could out of them. People of that sort were meant to be gulled and fleeced. What was the use of them except to let others feed upon their substance?

His reasoning was unanswerable, and given as though he had convinced himself. Elise, at any rate, did not answer it. She merely glanced up at him and said significantly,

'You want to get away.'

Lefroy said nothing. His slight change of colour and down-cast eyes seemed to own that she had hit the mark.

Certainly the dominant feeling at the present moment was a vehement hankering for change and novelty, to drown, if it could not cure, the state of chronic mortification his *amour propre* had been in for some time. It galled him to have the sense of his insignificance forced upon him as it had been of late. He was feeling more of a sceptic on certain points than ever, decidedly thankful withal that he did not stand committed to love and faith or life-partnership with anybody. The

world was wide. There might be an infinity of experiences in store for him yet.

'Well,' said Elise cheerfully, when they parted finally, and she wished him *bon voyage*, 'I foretell that, between Boston beauties and Roman Fornarinas, you will forget soon even to dream of the bright eyes of Mrs. Kennedy.'

'Mrs. Kennedy,' he began, but checked himself, and added imperturbably, 'Yes; and if I cannot forget to remember, you may be sure that I shall remember to forget.'

It was a solace to him in after life, when looking back on times where otherwise he might have seen no high cause for self-satisfaction, to think that it should have ended so on his part, with an epigram!

If his absence was felt anywhere, it was certainly neither at Monks' Orchard nor at the farm. He was scarcely missed. The grand topic among them all was the trip to Paris. It was talked of for the first fortnight in November. The suggestion that Cressida and Joe should join the party, first broached half in jest, was constantly being brought up again, and the idea danced before Cressida like a will-o'-the-wisp. It promised her brief glimpses of a sort of amusement and brilliancy denied to her now, but for which the taste in her had survived in full. Joe, seeing how her wishes were set upon it, had not returned a positive No, though he would not commit himself to a Yes. He granted that it might be very good fun. There was an exhibition of machinery open which he wished to see, and they had not been away from home for a year, and Cressida was looking pale and down-spirited sometimes. But his own heart was fixed on a plan once mooted of running down for three weeks

to Seacombe. Joe could be very obstinate on occasion.

Lady Molly, who had been looking forward to the Paris visit for a year, had her motives for preferring on the whole that the Kennedys should be of the party. Elise was still complacent on the subject of the growing understanding between her and Alec, but the young lady had her doubts whether, if things remained at the present dead lock, she would be allowed to take this journey as at first planned. People, she was sure, would say they were engaged. Now Alec had never told his love (if he did love), or offered marriage (if he aspired to her hand). To lose her Parisian trip would have been the worst of all. Going a party of five the connection became less marked, might entirely escape mention.

After hanging in the balance for a long while, the question was finally decided one evening at Monks' Orchard. Elise had had a dinner-party. All the guests were now gone except the Kennedys, and Joe was being attacked on two sides, by Elise and Molly, both bent on extorting from him a promise to join the party to Paris. He had a string of objections ready, but what chance has a man against two ladies, one young, one old, and both determined?

Cressida took no part in the skirmish. She was in a strange mood, excited by talking, feeling wayward and absent, not unhappy ~~quite~~ the contrary—and even more preternaturally alive than usual to impressions from without or within. Sitting apart, near the window, with the star-flowers in her hair, her clear pale features and glittering eyes thrown out by the shadows, she looked like some fair, fabulous creature escaped from the land of dreams, a truant

here on our dull, plodding earth;—some chance impersonation of subtle delight—a vision inspiring to a poet, perplexing to an ordinary beholder, infatuating to a lover. She was thinking, and the play of her eyes, turn of lip, and mobile features seemed to follow her passing thoughts like changing shadows;—it was a face like a song-poem at that moment.

At that moment Alec alone happened to have his eyes turned thatway. Suddenly glancing across, Cressida met his look, and something went through her that should have been fear,—only shrinking was overcome by a pleasurable feeling of ascendancy. It was just as if he had come, leant over her, and said audibly, 'You and I, away from the world.'

False coinage of the brain. She shook off her abstraction and awoke out of her reverie to hear Joe yielding helplessly to the importunities of Lady Molly and Elise. Yes, he and Cressida would go with them to Paris for the week. There was no help for it. Perhaps Seacombe might be taken afterwards on their way home.

It was all settled then, just as she had wished.

CHAPTER XXVI.

SUNRISE AND SUNSET.

SURPRISING news had for some time continued to come to Greywell from Seacombe. Two months marked by rapid steady advance. So wrote Fan, but guardedly. For the full extent of the hopes now held out to her was such that she hardly dared report them to those at home, so long as the chances remained, as in any case they must awhile, so shifting and slender. Nay, the present phase of transition was beyond question

the most precarious and critical of all.

Would that last alarm, which had made her all but despair, prove to have been a crisis, deciding the balance favourably—a rallying point from which to date the turn of the tide?

Certain it was that since her return a new state of things had begun, and symptoms were setting distinctly in the right direction. One seemed to see on, by a chain of perfectly natural causes, from rest and sleep regained, to vigour; from vigour, to normal spirits and revived activity; the balance of mind readjusting itself as the disturbing forces relent; the infinite restorative powers of youth working out the complete renovation of a seemingly exhausted, trampled-out mechanism.

Not a word of all this, however, would she breathe to Halliday. He had asked for news, so write she must. But she felt there was too much in every way at stake for herself for her wishes not to colour her hopes, perhaps falsely. At any rate, they should not colour her communications. She meant, whatever happened, to abide by her choice, for the reasons she had expressed to him; but knew that, should things go wrong again, this dragging on meanwhile with dreams and chances for herself in a counter-direction would be the likeliest thing in the world to impair her judgment and resolution. She would write nothing that could be construed into a desire to build on possible changes, or an appeal to him to wait; lest the present sunshine should prove a mere passing deceptive gleam. She had held firm to her mark once, but was human, and felt it might very well be that if she looked back and indulged in wayside contemplations, she would on a second

occasion be found with a duller memory, a shorter sight, and a weaker purpose.

So she made her letters as discouraging as she possibly could, in the sense of them. But whether, in the tone of them, the sunbeam would break through, or whether Halliday, repudiating the idea that he should have been the one to try and induce anybody to sacrifice a higher to a lower principle, certain it is that after his last parting with Fan at Greywell, so far from feeling his interest in the young couple at Stoke Michael diminish, or any willingness to let himself be estranged or cut off from direct friendly connection with them, his mind reverted to them ever oftener, in solitude, in society, and all this came to exercise a silent voice in his affairs.

He had finally abandoned the idea of applying for the Scotch appointment. Various other ostensible reasons he could assign; but underlying them all was his private wish not to bind himself down to anything just at present, least of all to a post in a distant part of the country.

No sooner was he free in the summer than, persistently declining Elise's repeated offers of hospitality at Monks' Orchard, he wrote to Fan that he was coming to Seacombe for a month at once. A pleasant surprise for her in her retreat. And here, when he arrived, he found a pleasant surprise, such as he had little dreamed of, in store for him. The change, far more apparent to the newcomer than to Fan, who had watched it growing from day to day, spoke for itself. Why, no need of the College of Physicians to tell them now that, let this amendment but continue, carefully fostered and uninterrupted, and it must lead on to radical cure, and that before long. Nor that,

on the other hand, should any serious check intervene, and much ground be lost again, the disappointment, so far as their present sanguine expectations were concerned, would probably be final. They felt they were waiting for the best—or the worst.

With this brighter and more attainable prospect now clearly in view, Halliday's own interest in the young fellow's ultimate lot was growing markedly warmer and deeper. A matter he had at first put his hand to out of charitable principle, persevered in chiefly from regard and sympathy for Fan, was now taking hold of him in another way, and he was coming to watch its progress with the closest, keenest, personal solicitude and protective affection.

He was feeling towards Norbert as you might for some bird with a broken wing you have picked up and tended, though thinking it would die, and that attaches you strangely by reviving under your care. Here was a nature, attractive in itself, becoming increasingly so by dependence on him. For Halliday's companionship and sympathy were invaluable now. They had helped before when they could do no more than avert or allay mental suffering for an hour. Now that Norbert was approaching to something more like his old self, and his mind becoming gradually more alive to healing and invigorating moral influences, there was room for the friend at hand to exercise the fullest bracing power of the strong over the sensitive drooping nature, that finds in the healthier mind of another the support and refreshment wanted to keep it from sinking.

It is not always when we are doing good that we are allowed the extra luxury of feeling sure of it; but so much was transparent, and what with that and a grow-

ing appreciation of those likable qualities of temperament less and less obscured by morbid conditions, Halliday found that his secret heart was so set on this boy's recovery, that disappointment would have been as unendurable to him as to Fan herself.

One little incident, that had marked his first visit to the cottage on the day after his arrival, they both were tempted to dwell upon as significant—a key to the future, and the beginning of better things—if only it might be so.

It was Sunday evening. The trio had walked out together for a quiet stroll in the lanes, and were returning by twilight. The path chanced to lead them past the little church of Stoke Michael, which was perched on the hill overhanging the village. Evening service was just over, and a rural congregation shuffling out to the strains of the organ within, played with more zeal than discretion. Norbert had stopped for an instant to listen. Fan's eyes sought his face instinctively. She had a nervous dread of the reawakening of associations of this sort, so uniformly disastrous during his illness—the most dangerous aggravation to his excitement or to his depression, according to the state he happened to be in—that ever since the improvement care had been taken to keep such out of his way.

But instead of the restless change of countenance, the irritated, helpless, impatient shrinking from remembrances which, from a legion of causes, have in them something too painful to be borne, she saw him listening with the natural expression of that critical attention roused in a man by any sort of exhibition of skill or clumsiness, in an art of which he has some mastery, that may suddenly be thrust upon his notice.

'Not so bad an instrument for a country church,' she remarked tentatively.

'No; but the fellow, whoever he is, plays with his elbows, one would think,' said Norbert, with a laugh. 'It's odd he can't manage his own organ better than that.'

Halliday observed he was going to take a look inside. The others followed him. The last stragglers had dispersed, and the musician in charge, having concluded his performance to his own satisfaction, was just about to lock up and leave. Halliday got him aside into conversation on the subject of the instrument, a late gift to the church, it appeared, from a wealthy maiden lady. It was a superior piece of manufacture, too good for its place, and of which he was as proud as he was ignorant. Meanwhile Norbert and Fan stood by the organ, the latter investigating stops, pedals, pipes, manuals with the same rapid, keen comprehension with which Joe Kennedy would have scrutinised a steam-engine, and Halliday a practicable glacier or a School-Board report.

In a few minutes he was playing himself, in a style not a little astonishing to the native *virtuoso*. Even Halliday, in spite of all he had heard, was surprised at the curious facility apparent even now. He was no musician himself, and the wonders of musical memory that may lie by for years and come out perfectly fresh and unimpaired were an inscrutable mystery to him. As to Fan, whilst she listened she gathered so much, at least, that Norbert's right hand had not altogether lost its cunning.

The worst was, having to desist. They had been there nearly an hour already. Leaving off was a wrench, a spell of ease and forgetfulness roughly broken, a rude thrust back into the purga-

tory of physical suffering and a saddened life. The painful impression remained, and the result was a shrinking from a repetition of the experiment, a deep repugnance openly expressed, so that when the suggestion was made to him, he met it by a flat refusal. Fan and Halliday took counsel, and came to the opinion that the time had come for him to conquer this; that he was strong enough now to derive strength and benefit, and not harm, from the exertion and self-constraint. Halliday set himself to talk him out of his reluctance, bringing all the weight of the personal influence he had acquired to bear on the point, in addition to all the powers of persuasion he could muster.

Now it had been Norbert's bane never to know authority in a worthy shape; never to meet it where, of his own free will, he could volunteer to call it master. His friends, too, chanced to have been men of slighter, weaker natures than his own. But his perceptions were true, and he instinctively acknowledged superiority when he met it. The impression that Halliday thought he should do this, and that he could if he chose, that he would despise him perhaps if he let a nervous weakness get the upper hand, was a stirring motive helping to wrest him from his weaker self, and conquered.

He was induced to repeat the trial, to take to practising regularly, and held to the resolution, though such attempts were fraught with far more pain than pleasure to him for a long while. But what Fan and Halliday were looking for was for the pleasure to become first an interest, then something more precious still—a means of bringing home to him the fact that he had a possession with which it rested only with him to achieve a good

deal yet; thus by restoring the foundations of self-confidence and self-respect removing what was now the most threatening hindrance to the revival of mental vitality.

This exceptional faculty, re-awakened by exercise, now for the first time allowed free play, in a medium of sympathy and encouragement, may render aid far beyond the simple one of affording now and then some calm and rest from pain to the troubled brain and tired heart. Day by day it serves to make clearer the increasing conviction that he has it in him to regain his footing, retrieve the consequences of past misadventure, hold his own in the world among men, nor need to despair of his share of the earth's inheritance. A moral panacea for the sickness of the soul. It reacted on his whole demeanour, gave his thoughts connection and point, seemed gradually to be bringing about a righting of the general organism, nay a better, firmer balance of natural powers, with better promise for the future than ever before.

All was not sunshine; there were gloomy intervals—times when he was borne down by a sense of flagging, disabled physical force,—such a falling short of the powers of life generally as forbade him to do faint justice to the special ability, keen and clear as ever,—when the longed-for restoration was inconceivable to his disheartened imagination, and there seemed no term to the present trial. Times when a slight thing might have sufficed to throw him back into mortal despondency and indolence. But he was not alone nor unbefriended, and the supporters he had by him were the right, the best sort—friends he could trust entirely, who would not buoy him up with groundless hopes like short-sighted comfort-

ters, but placed their faith in a brighter future for him on solid facts, to which his reason must give in. He had begun to wish, to care to get well, to feel as if he should. Much might be dark and involved still, but the track was found, and with three hearts fast allied and all working in concert, surely, surely, thinks Fan, the day must be theirs at last.

And as the summer draws to a close, and there can no longer be any doubt of the victory, there are rare moments in store for Fan. A second youth is springing up for Norbert, and day by day she may feast her eyes on the fulfilment of hope, whilst in Halliday's pleasure at this complete recovery, in which he too has had some hand, there is something that gives an added sweetness to the brightening life she now wakes to every morning.

To see those two beginning to take to each other as friends, Norbert's reserve overcome by a newly inspired feeling of confidence, it seemed as if she could never be tired of watching them together, nor be grateful enough to Halliday for the part he had played, and the inestimable service he was unconsciously rendering now.

Neither was the benefit of such intercourse all on one side. The power of endearing to us the qualities which are the reverse of our own is certainly not the least valuable a friend can possess, and men with tough hearts and strong heads, who most need the blessings of gentleness, mental refinement, and ideal imagination, are most blessed when these emanate to them from some chosen associate. Sometimes the delight of it all seems almost more than Fan can take in. Often whilst they are talking she finds herself sitting silent, absorbed; a

confused feeling comes over her, and she is obliged to keep looking at Norbert to convince herself that it is so, that his life has been given back to him, that he is there as he used to be, and inspirited by fresh hope and health. At such moments we do not inquire within ourselves whether life is worth living.

And one day when she and Halliday chance to be alone—he will look forward now, there is no preventing him—he says something to her about themselves, asks her for a promise. She looks up impulsively, as if going to give it; checks herself, however, saying, ‘But you must promise me something too.’

‘Must I?’ he says confidently. ‘Perhaps, though, I shall forestall you by one I’m going to make, without your asking.’

Fan listened with a smile, as he went on,

‘Mine is, that he shall always be our first care; that his home shall always be with us; and that, if I can help it, our interests and his shall never be estranged.’

Fan gave him her hand without speaking. Certainly she had never felt towards him as she did at that moment. Their compact was sealed now.

‘And it must all depend upon his getting well,’ she began presently, with some eagerness; ‘and then I shall have to fight his battles at home, and win them, to make sure that no harm comes from that quarter; and all that must be settled first, before we think of ourselves.’

‘Now come, not too many conditions please,’ remonstrated Halliday, laughing; ‘get him well, quite well, first, and then we will see.’

Thus it comes to pass that Fan has long been sending such letters to Greywell as should spread cheerfulness even there, though

Mrs. Alleyne cries over them, in private, just as she did over the desponding ones of a year ago.

The Colonel acquiesced in the present more favourable state of things, but the diminution of asperity thus induced was not of long duration. It was impossible for others to suspect what an unutterable relief this good turn Norbert's health was taking had been to him. Although he had never sacrificed a whim, never bated a breath of his ill-temper, prejudices, self-will, and domineering habit to serve his son, he was attached to him in an extraordinary manner, his affection coming out after the extraordinary, perverted manner of selfish persons, which would be almost grotesque but for the fact that in the action it tells as a curse, not a blessing, on both parties. Of all his family Norbert was the one who had the greatest hold over his feelings, and the one to whom he had shown himself most persistently intolerant. Like many unhappy characters, he took a morbid pleasure in making those he loved unhappy also. Norbert's loss would have distressed him more than anything else in the world. But his preference was sheer tyranny in the issue, for he must see his favourites, before all others, the puppets of his will. His son seemed irrevocably ordained by Nature to thwart him, and it was only whilst racked by fear that the bitter sentiments thus engendered long ago had been forced to hold their peace. And now he may put by his worst misgivings. Anxiety diminishes daily, the bettered state of things is gradually assuming a certain, settled aspect, and he may, must look on. A day is coming when all this prolonged period of alarm will seem like a tale that is told. The present is changing, has al-

ready reached a point from which it is reasonable, nay, inevitable, to take thought for the future. Colonel Alleyne, the more he looks at it the less he can like it. Already a distinctly injured feeling is creeping in—something that makes him revert to past collisions, grievances, and disappointments with a dim baffled sense of complete frustration in that quarter hitherto, a suspicion that Norbert in years to come will have his own way, which is not Colonel Alleyne's way; that no pains will be spared to make him independent of his father's advice and control, and cast the latter's authority and wishes to the winds. The right of might to which the Colonel had been used to appeal may be on the other side now. Fan has become something more than a mere talking ally—she is not to be cowed—and he has a vague notion that there is another to second her actively. The Colonel sees himself worsted prospectively, and it embitters him afresh.

No one would have credited him with the genuine thankfulness and gladness he had felt, so characteristically were they put out of sight, not to say out of existence. Not in the faintest degree were they allowed to alter his general demeanour, he making a virtue, as it were, of preserving his sombre unbending individuality intact, as far above the approaches of satisfaction as of misfortune. Thus the limbo-like shadows and monotony distinguishing that household are, as aforetime, only broken by vagaries of temper on his part, as though he were bent on making others as miserable as himself. But no one in the family thinks of wondering at that; they are not accustomed to anything else.

Mrs. Alleyne scarcely minds

just now. His outbursts about trifles that have displeased him, childish exhibitions of violence (that would be ridiculous merely, but for their power in adult children of making it almost impossible for happiness to abide under the same roof with them, and for the nervous disabling effect of living in a state of perpetual petty apprehension)—well, she cannot feel them at present. The countless mortifying dilemmas into which, with her household and acquaintance, he is always bringing her by his inconsiderate ways, are of no consequence in the world to her during those first few weeks of the delight of knowing that all is well, or may yet be well, with Norbert.

But Jeanie? How comes it that this unexpected sunshine which has made her mother and sister so light-hearted *cannot* stop her spirits from sinking slowly? It must be selfish and wicked not to care. Clearly she has grown selfish and wicked lately. Looking back she has proof of that.

Why, last year, when her brother's life was in the utmost danger, and there seemed little if any hope of the cloud being ever thus entirely removed, she herself had been buoyed up and joyous in her heart in the midst of the trouble, because—because a new light had broken into her own life; and now that has faded, and can never be lit again, it seems that nothing can make up to her for it. She torments her imagination with strange self-reproachful conjectures, such as that if it had been given her to choose between her brother's restoration to health and her lover's faith she would not, could not, have been generous. However, the choice was not hers to make. Norbert may live or die; she and Lewis Lefroy are divided for ever.

It is not because they have lost sight of each other, nor that they have quarrelled. That is the worst of it. Absence and misunderstandings are curable evils. They have met several times since that afternoon at the farm—at Monks' Orchard, at Lullington garden-parties, and so forth. Lefroy's very friendliness and good-humour on such occasions seemed to put her at a greater distance from him. She feels the little distinction in his manner towards her is no longer there. A passing fancy, that sprang up quickly—quickly outgrown, on one side at all events. Till it appears strange that the news of his having left England should make the difference to her that it does.

Again, retracing, as she is always doing, every meeting and conversation they ever had, she perceives plainly enough that she may be supposed to have dreamt the meaning she seemed once to catch in what passed. How far had he really any feeling on the subject of herself? She is not quite clear about that and its significance—or insignificance. Nor does it much matter now, since one thing is clear, that it is all over.

The knowledge had come on her like a jar and a shock, rested on her like a heavy load, and neither in herself nor in her surroundings could she find an escape from it.

The Colonel noticed that she was listless and low-spirited. He wondered what foolish fancy could possess the girl, and be fretting her. His daughters had plenty of fresh air, plenty to eat, and a comfortably furnished home; what more could they possibly require? Sincerely he did not see.

Jeanie, after a time, had begun to grope round vaguely, awkwardly, for some resource, some refuge

from herself. She remembered how Fan in childish days used to electrify them all by describing the wild things she would be driven to do when she was grown up, if Greywell did not improve in the mean time—how she would 'run away' or go out as a governess or a telegraph-clerk, or otherwise dispose of her superfluous activity. To Jeanie, who had no superfluous activity, all this had seemed, at the time, the greatest nonsense, mere talk. She now felt a kindred desire in herself. Not, indeed, from the same reason. It was an instinctive recoil from the present shrunken aspect of her life as it was, with its interests, occupations, pleasures.

O, Fan would have done it, could have done it. But Jeanie, never. She had not the pluck; was afraid of people, and had never been used to shift for herself. She knew nothing either. Fan was clever; had contrived to educate herself in a wonderful fashion. Jeanie, never over-fond of learning, had forgotten the little, badly taught, that had constituted her education. Certainly no one, as she was well aware, would consider her fit to teach anything but the Catechism.

As to running away, it was a child's story-book absurdity. To whom should she go, and with what conceivable object? Fan had her hands full, and that delicate task of hers must not be complicated or retarded.

It was one, too, that Jeanie, to confess the truth, shrank from sharing, feeling herself wholly incompetent. Moreover it seemed drawing to a close. Norbert would soon be well, and then they would come home, and everything go on there as before.

Runaway freedom would be worse than useless to Jeanie in a

busy striving world, where most people are actively battling and pressing forward to compass their own well-being and advantage, passing by or hustling aside those who fall or who have no weapons, no backers. Such a world could not want her. That was certain.

Greywell is her world, with its vacant days, gloomy meals, long evenings, interminable Sundays,—the very essence of family life vitiated by the sense of constraint that has eaten into them—the old routine diversified as of old by collisions, scenes, *fracas* to be hushed up; annoyances with an ingenious variety about them to preclude the possibility of their victims becoming callous. No one in that house can do anything right now, it seems.

That is her world, and most assuredly it will not help her now. So long as that dull surface had remained unbroken, having known no other, she had not consciously, actively suffered from the stagnation. A small hope, a pretty vision, a suggestive possibility, has chanced to intrude, and finds all things ready to insure its playing an abnormal part. It has been; and Jeanie cannot go back and see things as she saw them before. She has flung herself into tempting waters to clasp a reflection that seemed to beckon her on. The surface was glass, has broken, she has hurt herself, and the image is nowhere. Estranged from her little world she feels no power, no desire to familiarise herself with it again.

In any ordinary home the dangerous turn her thoughts were taking would have become manifest more clearly; but where gloom is the order of the day, an extra shade or two escapes due attention. Besides, there is always much to blind our eyes to the inner life of those we live with.

Still now and then Mrs. Alleyne did seem to awake to the fact that something was amiss with her stepdaughter, though definite signs there were none to fix upon. Perhaps the girl wanted change. She attacked the Colonel on the subject, to meet with a preliminary rebuff, of course. The proposal, badly timed and injudiciously put forward, was made an excuse for a scene of the usual kind. As to taking them away this autumn, it was impossible, he asserted. Mrs. Alleyne said no more just then, fully intending, however, to return to the charge. But it was too late. Jeanie is drifting on fast—offers no opposition—does not know how.

That is her world, and it has come into her head that she might get out of it.

It would be so easy. Selfish, perhaps; but it is the prime danger of such sickly, drooping states of mind that we see ourselves falsely and isolated, cut off from communion even with those around us, estranged from humanity, and driven to think of our acts as if they concerned ourselves alone. The truly noble and generous spirits stop short of consummating the selfish feeling by the selfish deed. An impulse survives; as it were a reflex action of half-stunned heroism, and lends them faith or fortitude to carry them through. Jeanie, poor child, could boast no heroic qualities—how should she!—to bear her up: she let herself go down into those dark ways with a dull idea that no path out of them existed.

Already the days when she had her little dream seem very far off, and it has taken its place on the shelf as the dream-tale which it turned out to be.

A little more brightness or geniality, or even activity, in the

medium around her, and all might have been different. For Jeanie, though weak, was not worthless, though self-centred; she had not been hardened by calculation. Neither was there anything more than common in the shadows of mind haunting her. Such despairing fits come to all, to the first and last alike, and what comes of such seizures to each will depend on what nature and circumstances and we ourselves have made of us.

There was a monstrous art practised in the Middle Ages, whereby children's growth was arrested, their shape deformed. In those days there was a demand for dwarfs, and these helpless creatures were fabricated accordingly. But at least they were not sent out to fight like other men.

Minds may be treated in the same way, though without any malign intention on the part of those responsible—kept from developing, from taking tone and strength or retaining their natural elasticity. Such should be shut up within convent-walls; it were the kinder and more consistent treatment, since at the first chance contact with life's home-thrusts they fall if there is none to help them. Again, a morbid sense of misery can seldom be thought or moralised away. A touch of healthful, happier feeling of some sort is the remedy needed—the only antidote that works. Jeanie's barren little field of life furnished no promise, no spur, no incentive. She tries to reason, but it leads her to ponder questions that have betrayed less simple minds than hers, and brought them on to the precipice.

Would it be wrong? It would have seemed so to her in another's case, but there was everything to falsify the aspect of her own to her.

After the first shock of the thought, she was tempted to revert to it, to try and make out that there was no moral consideration here involved.

What real good was her existence to anybody? Once she had seemed to see how it might have a meaning through another whom she might have loved. That has gone—a vacant feeling comes instead—her own life has become unlivable.

At least, it has become so hard to cling to it, that she longs to let it go—she saw a way—it played into her hands. She had a distant recollection of something that had happened when she was a child to a girl of whom they knew something. An accident, that was. She had heard people talking about it at the time, and the circumstances sank into her memory—never recalled perhaps till it sprang up now at a suggestion from within.

That heavy autumnal day draws near its close. There has been nothing to mark it out from the rest. Jeanie has not shown herself more silent or down-spirited than usual now, but for some time her outer existence has been somewhat automatic and unmeaning.

As she bids the others good-night as usual, mechanically, she does not feel like one who has taken an independent momentous resolution, nor even like one on the verge of a terrible step. It is more like yielding to a dull, gradual pressure she cannot resist. She is not overstrained, or excited, or ill. Not more unhappy than yesterday or the day before. Yet something had stirred up a vague dissatisfaction on her account in Mrs. Alleyne's mind, and she determined that the next day she would have advice for her.

But Jeanie has put herself into the hands of a surer physician.

She would not like them to know, she thinks, how miserable she has been; but that they never need, and this she inwardly keeps repeating to convince herself,

'They will think it was an accident—my fault—that I mistook—in the dusk—'

When she got to her own room she took from a drawer a little box, which she opened with a key on her chain. There were letters she wanted to destroy, letters of Lefroy's—pretty, frothy miscellanies—some mere formal nothings, half a page long; some more extensive and elaborate, all equally nicely and neatly worded, full of alliterative turns of speech and epigrammatic compliments. Still, despite the weight of artificiality under which the spark of genuineness had much ado to shine, they had been inordinately dear to her once. She burnt them carefully, half reluctantly; it seemed a pity to let them go, even now.

There was a photograph. That must go too. She remained looking at it for some minutes, with a curious perplexed expression, without bitterness or sentiment, as at something already far away.

He had hers somewhere. Would he ever look at it, care more for her perhaps? That was what she would never know.

The secret souvenirs of her life ended there. For the rest—for those she leaves—she has tried not to give it a thought.

There was Millie, the one thing in life that seemed to adhere to her a little. Perhaps it was her duty to go on living for her sake; Jeanie could dimly admit this, but it failed to keep her back. Then Millie's life was bearable, she thought; hers was not.

Cowardly do you call it? Coward you, who, armed and well

prepared against the buffets of the struggle for existence, judge the less happily gifted or defended. No hard words for those with unarmed, unnerved hands, and faint hearts, who fall, though it be before the first enemy.

CHAPTER XXVII.

NEMESIS.

ONE morning Fan at Stoke Michael got a telegraphic summons to Greywell, urging her to come to them at once. Halliday was still at Seacombe, having again prolonged his stay, and on hearing the news suggested that Norbert should come over to him until such time as Fan might be able to return.

The message said merely that Jeanie was very ill; but the manner and character of the recall were so alarming, that they seemed scarcely to leave room for doubt that there must be worse behind.

In the first moment of bewilderment and consternation the family had sent off to Fan immediately; instinctively falling back on the best and strongest member, as on some one who might help. But when she reached them, it was to find that it was only the others, and not Jeanie, she could help now.

Mrs. Alleyne, completely prostrated by the shock, told her, as coherently as she could, the story of what had occurred. A terrible misadventure; fatal carelessness on the part of the girl herself.

Jeanie last evening had been seen to go alone into her mother's room, where on the shelf was a preparation of ether she had been taking lately. There was laudanum standing by, which Jeanie, mistaking the labels in the dark, had poured out instead, nor even



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Figure 2 shows the effect of the amount of water on the rate of desiccation. As would be expected, the rate of desiccation for the control was the slowest. The rate of desiccation for the plants treated with 100 ml of water was the fastest. The rate of desiccation for the plants treated with 50 ml of water was intermediate.

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On the morning I am at Midland, I get a telephone message to the wireless office to come to them at once. I am still at Scarborough, but upon prolonged listening, I hear the words suggested. Next minute I come over the wireless time. I am not able to return.

The message said merely
 Jamie was very ill; but the
 merchants of the reed
 so alarming, that they
 seemed to have reason
 that there must be worse.

In the first moment of distress and concern, having had sent out to fetch a doctor, instinctively for lack of the best and surest remedy, he sought some one to help him, who appeared to him to be to find that was only the only way to save the child, never.

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The secret souvenirs of her life ended there.



discovered what she had done ; so, at least, they must suppose. As Fan heard, her large grave eyes searched her mother's face intently, but she read nothing extraordinary there.

She did not speak, but presently went and locked herself into Jeanie's room. She knew where the girl had kept her letters ; had ere this divined something from observation, though no hint had been dropped, much less confidence breathed to her on the subject of Lefroy.

She searched and found all just as she had dreaded. The box open and empty, and there were the cinders and half-burnt fragments lying unnoticed in the grate.

Fan sat down and hid her face in her hands.

What a slight clue ! A trifle light as air, indeed. Yet a voice speaking out of heaven could not have made the crushing certainty any stronger.

Nay, perhaps, could Jeanie have reflected how her childish idea of blinding the rest was beyond her power to carry out ; could she have foreseen that it would fail even in a single instance ; could she have taken in, even in her faint way, the eternally saddening impress it must leave on one to whom she would have declared herself incapable of doing a wilful injury, she would have shrunk from visiting her wrongs on innocent hearts thus remorselessly.

Fan roused herself at last. She had a part to perform in life ; she had made one, and it would claim her again.

Well, those poor women should never know. For the rest she would wait and see ; but for the present she would keep her secret to herself.

Three weeks she remained at Greywell. Everything there seem-

ed changed or changing—whether for the better or the worse was another question. Fan herself was altering fast. There was nothing of the child about her now, except that inherent simplicity and single-heartedness, the characteristic she held in common with Norbert. The others depended on her as on a prop. The Colonel himself had taken to consulting her, and to leaving practical matters in her hands for her to settle. The last blow had staggered him in an extraordinary manner ; he hardly seemed like the same man. But though the violence in his temperament appeared to have been stunned, the effect was to drive him more and more within himself. He had become moody and speechless, and to Fan in particular cold, stiff, and reserved.

Mrs. Alleyne and her step-daughter were more and more thrown upon each other ; but what an increasingly dreary perspective lay before them in the future ! And for Norbert, looking onwards a few months to the time when he and his father should have come into contact again, Fan foresaw nothing that was good—or out of which good might come.

The news had been broken to him already, and Fan, fearing some ill-effect, was now growing anxious to return. Halliday, moreover, would be obliged to leave very shortly. It was reassuring to know from him that Norbert's recovery had not been thrown back, nor his progress materially checked. One natural result of the intelligence had been to rouse in him a great longing and impatience to be with them all at home. He felt as if they must now be drawn closer together—mysteriously united in a common sorrow. If he had not forgotten the old standing differ-

ences between him and his father, these were sunk now.

In his mind, that is. But Fan must think of them, and whether directly the order of things has fallen back into something like its usual course they are, or are not, to have the past all over again. There was a crisis ahead, and it seemed likely to be precipitated. Halliday's last letters had brought before her a fresh scheme, distant still, but as definite and certain as possible. He had been offered and had accepted a government appointment that would take him to Germany next year for a certain time, probably a twelvemonth. His mission was to collect facts and information concerning the working of educational schemes in that country, to be supplemented by his own observation, and he was to leave England on his errand in the summer. Between him and Fan all was already arranged, and their plan was that Norbert should accompany them of course. The central town which they proposed to make their head-quarters was one that offered him peculiar facilities for carrying on his musical studies.

The scheme was one they could, and would have to, carry through, in the face of opposition from Colonel Alleyne, who foreseeing thus much might not even offer it. But what he could not prevent he might yet make them rue, by accepting it on his own terms. They would win at the cost of mutual estrangement, withdrawal of all hope of kindly feeling and interest—complaints and bickerings at home, wearing and depressing to Mrs. Alleyne and Millie; the whole painful, and in the end hardening, to Norbert.

Fan, on the last evening, found herself with her father alone. The others had purposely left them

together, dimly aware that those two had practical questions, if not burning ones, to discuss.

In a day or two the Greywell establishment was to be temporarily broken up. The Colonel, his wife, and daughter were to go away for a couple of months, and future arrangements must be talked over, touched upon at least. It was true the end of the year would find the family at home again, but the Colonel entertained in his mind a remote plan of giving up Greywell and removing with his family to some other place of residence, probably London, and of this Fan got the first hint to-night. She was pleased, and observed that it would be better for her mother and Millie. Then she stopped; he was looking at her, and both felt conscious that it was neither of her mother nor Millie that they were there to speak.

The Colonel went on to intimate pretty authoritatively what he desired to know. Norbert, of whom they had now sufficient assurance that by the winter he would be as well as ever he was in his life, would, his father foresaw, be wishing to go to work again. The Colonel had reasons for wanting to come to some understanding on that score, and for much secret impatience to ascertain whether his son had any intentions, and if so, what they were.

His manner, though constrained and repressed, might have intimidated a nervous person. Fan was past intimidation. There was a thought in her mind that left no room for fear or petty feelings of any sort. There was, perhaps, a vague hope underneath encouraging and spurring her on to the present venture.

She was silent some time before replying—then said point-blank,

'Do you expect him to go back to Mr. Marriott's? Because—I do not think he will.'

'As to what I expect,' he retorted sharply, 'we need not enter into it. The effect of any wish I have ever expressed has uniformly been to set him against it. My advice and authority have been persistently disregarded on every possible occasion, and that he should continue to fly in the face of whatever plan I make for him is only, I suppose—' He stopped. Either Fan's look or some slight inward compunction checked him, but he concluded obstinately, '—is what he has taught me to expect.'

The bitterness in his tone and expression were of ill-omen. Fan's task was a stiff one. There was no denying that the first use Norbert would desire to make of the life restored to him would be to set at naught the strongest wishes and most rooted prejudices of his father. Colonel Alleyne might fail to stop him in his course, but might and would, it seemed, do his best to the last to spoil that course for him as far as possible. Was the strife never to have an end?

'There's no use in going over all the old ground again,' said Fan, after a silence. 'You know his inclinations; they have never really altered. I don't see how they could.'

'Let him follow them, then,' he said briefly.

'You mean he will have to do so without your consent or approval?' said Fan significantly. The Colonel shrugged his shoulders with an impatient gesture.

'I am quite aware that these are of no consequence to him, no more than to his advisers. So long as he finds people to support him in preposterous notions he will become more confirmed in

them. What he wants is, I imagine, to be free of me for ever. That being the case, there is no more to be said.'

He spoke it like an ultimatum—the ultimatum she had dreaded. On the one hand it was clear that she, Halliday, and Norbert were the strongest, that the latter's future was no longer his father's to destroy; on the other was a threatening outlook that put a stop to rejoicing—a promise of fostered antipathies, good feeling checked, of everlasting discord, damping, harassing to Norbert, embittering to his father.

'You'll do nothing to help him, then?' she asked at length slowly; 'I'm to tell him that, even now, and that you don't wish to smooth the way for him, and give him a fresh start in a new line, but that his choice of it must always be a ground of quarrel between you?'

The Colonel made a movement of irritation. 'Can you not see that that is a question for him alone?' he said hastily. 'It is not in my power to alter my opinion on the point.'

'I call it a great deal—too much—to ask of any one,' she said warmly, 'to give up what the good of his whole life may hinge upon.'

'You presume to be the best judge of that,' he said, with sarcastic emphasis.

'There has been proof enough, for any one who wanted it,' she urged; 'if that doesn't convince you, I never shall.'

He said nothing, but his silence and expression fell on her with a dulling assurance of how resolutely he had shut himself out from conviction. Fan was feeling rather desperate.

'Then whatever he means to do will only have the effect of estranging him from you, and from home?' she said.

'I have reason enough to know,' he retorted, with fresh asperity, 'how slight a matter that will be for him and those in his confidence.'

'You don't know, you don't know,' exclaimed Fan vehemently. 'He *must* do what is best for him, but how can you believe it will ever be the same, without your good-will? It is true he has had to get on without that, but it has done harm all along. Do you not care how much more it does? Why, I think if he had had another sort of home, with the right sort of associations—if you had been kind to him—he would not have shrunk so from coming to us two years ago, not have felt as if anything were better than what he had to expect here, and it might just have saved him. I don't like to think of it—of all that you,—that might have been prevented. And as if that were not enough—'

She stopped short, but he had caught such an intensity of significance in her voice as disturbed him strangely. Not a word of hers had penetrated hitherto. What was there now that had struck, as it were, through the joints of his armour?

'What do you mean?' he asked abruptly.

Fan hesitated. She raised her eyes and said, half under her breath,

'Jeanie—'

He gave an almost unperceptible start; his look was averted, as if he feared to meet hers.

'Had you observed anything unusual about her the last weeks?' Fan continued.

'No, no,' he said promptly. 'She—she seemed a little grave and out of spirits, nothing more. Why do you ask?'

'Nothing more?'

'No.' But an increasing apprehension still forbade him to meet her eyes.

Fan spoke presently, with all the firmness she could muster.

'What I have to tell you, you will promise never to breathe to any one—mother, or Millie, or Norbert?'

He hastily signed assent.

'They believe it was an accident, and they must always believe that. But I—I know it was none,' she ended, in a whisper. Her eyes were fixed on his face; and as she watched it she understood that the fear had been in his mind from the first; only as a suspicion perhaps, but deeper, it may be, than he was aware.

'What is it that you know,' he asked, in a harsh forced tone, 'that makes you say so?'

'Only this—that the night before she burnt her letters and things, as one might if one knew one was not going to live.'

'That might be an accident,' he affirmed urgently; 'I *cannot* think it is true—'

'I have no proof but that. It is enough for me with what I know besides,' she added sadly.

'Inconceivable. No reason; no possible cause anywhere,' he muttered to himself inaudibly. 'She was, should have been, quite happy.'

Fan drew a long breath, and resumed steadfastly,

'She had a trouble, I think; something that she got brooding over in her mind, and but for which such a thought could never, never have entered it. But I say that what has been never need have come, never would, if things here had been good for her as they might, and some better power had ruled our lives and ourselves than the fear of displeasing you. You would have made cowards of us all if you could. How much pleasantness was there in such a way of life as hers at home? If once she took to fancying she

could never be happy again, I don't see what there was to show her she was wrong.'

She said no more, nor he. Fan had been moved to tell him what she had told to no other, feeling it was right and well for him to know. Neither could speak of it further. The Colonel had no word, no sign to give, it seemed. Fan, whom a wild deep feeling of pity had moved to gentleness at first, now felt a surging bitterness rise in her, overcoming other emotions. There was a curse on that house, then, which was not to be broken.

'And now about Norbert,' she said, rising. 'You say he's free and will do as he likes. Perhaps. But you can make his freedom bitter for him and mean to do it. You say he shall only follow his liking at the cost of as good as a break between you. You won't let him be happy—happier than he has been. And yet,' she added wistfully, 'if you knew what that means to him, I think, even now, that you would, and trust to him never to make you repent.'

He remained with fixed lips, his eyes on the ground, his features immovable, unyielding to the end, it seemed.

Fan had said everything she could think of, urged all there was to urge on her side. In vain. She went towards the door, feeling her cause lost. Well might hope abandon her if she failed now. Once for all she had been made to know there could be no reconciliation.

'Wait,' he said.

At a sign from him she turned back and came and stood beside him. He was not looking at her. Unconsciously he had taken hold of her hand, grasping it firmly, as if to steady himself and keep down rising agitation, whilst he said in

a voice that scarcely seemed his own nevertheless,

'You will say nothing from me to him you think it could hurt him to hear. Say his health is the first consideration—that I think of that. We will talk of the rest later, when he pleases.'

He stopped; but once begun the protest came spontaneously. He could not have silenced himself now—must give some expression to the feeling mastering all others at the moment—a clinging in heart to his son and a need for his son's affection.

'Say that before all things I want to see him well and happy, happier than he has been. Everything shall give way, if it must.'

Fan could not reply. Her head swam; an attempt to speak seemed to choke her. It was some minutes before she recovered the effect of a revulsion scarcely less violent than that which he was experiencing just then.

But Fan was feeling like one who, gone astray and groping about in dark catacombs, when on the point of giving himself up for lost suddenly sees distant daylight shining at the end of a long passage on which he has chanced unawares.

Was it possible that some sort of union might be approaching; that they might start again on altered ground, under fairer conditions; that better and brighter days awaited her mother and Millie in the far future? Something in her whispered, 'More than possible.'

The next day she left home with a lighter heart. Just as she was starting for the station a gay company drove by in a break. Only the Monks' Orchard party going to a shooting luncheon at a country house in the neighbourhood. Bright dresses, much laughter, and ceaseless *persiflage*

seemed the order of the day among them. The spectacle jarred upon Fan not a little, bringing back on her mind one or two things that had come to her ears lately.

Echoes had reached the Alleynes—even in their present retirement—of rumours Fan hated to hear. People who had not been included in Elise's invitations to Monks' Orchard had begun to make dangerously spiteful remarks, all levelled at Mrs. Kennedy—shafts that would have had no power to carry far or strike deep but for bygones that gave them point and poison—old stories that people were beginning to remember; romances perhaps, but founded on fact.

The trip to Paris had been finally fixed to come off the first week in November, now near at hand. The party upon their return to England would be scattered again. Elise was going back to London, the Kennedys to Seacombe, Lady Molly to her home. Alec's 'intentions' to all appearances were mistier than ever, and the result was that things in that coterie were no longer so smooth and pleasant as they had been.

Joe thought this protracted shuffling on Alec's part simply disgraceful, and had expressed his opinion on the subject to Cressida in the strongest terms.

She said—what could she say?—that Lady Molly was so habitually cold and 'undemonstrative' in her manner, and so haughty now and then, that it would be no wonder if any man hesitated to risk a rebuff of which she must put him in fear continually. Well, that might be, Joe allowed; but he affirmed all the same that after hanging about her so long in the way De Saumarez had been pleased to do—advertising their

two names together, so to speak—a man was bound to go in for it neck and crop.

Once when they were on the subject, and he was reprobating Alec's behaviour in language more unmeasured than usual, Cressida, to stop him, let drop the remark that this Paris excursion had been a preconcerted affair, and the manner of it might imply a tacit avowal of mutual understanding on the part of the respective families who had 'arranged' the marriage of the young people concerned.

This argument seemed to Joe tolerably conclusive. It satisfied him so well, that Cressida felt sorry she had laid stress upon it. So true, and yet so misleading.

He was personally reconciled to the prospect of Paris, promising himself a little run to Seacombe afterwards. The former painful associations haunting the latter place had all been dispelled by the late news of Norbert's happy recovery. Cressida might even dream, if she liked, of the old bond of friendship reestablished, with him, with Fan. All things seemed tending that way. But, somewhat to her own dismay, she looked forward to such possibilities with mereliless acquiescence. Her head was full of distracting thoughts, and the immediate present had absorbed not a few other considerations besides.

One afternoon, not long before the day fixed for starting, was marked by an incident equally startling and inexplicable, which confounded Cressida at the time, and to which she would have given more thought had she not been in an unnatural mood and fallen out of the habit of connected reflection, or of giving the same attention and observation to some things as usual.

Their preparations for leaving

were nearly completed, and they were in the sitting-room—Joe over some accounts; his affairs were in a more flourishing condition than could have been anticipated even a few months ago. An extraordinary yield of hops on his plantation had made him the envy of the less favoured proprietors in the neighbourhood, and coming at this crisis helped to retrieve his fortunes in a degree he had not dared to dream of. He had just been talking about it to Cressida. How was it that it afforded her no pleasure? To avoid conversation she had gone to the piano, and was still there, pre-luding aimlessly, when the post brought her husband a letter in a hand to her unknown. Happening to look round the next minute Cressida saw his face as she had never seen it yet, transformed by momentary passion. In blank astonishment she rushed up impulsively to ask him what he had heard. With a half-uttered violent exclamation he kept the letter from her, rose, walked to the window, and stood there for a few minutes with his face averted. Then he succeeded in recovering himself and turned to her, saying it was nothing.

‘Nothing?’ she repeated significantly and in reproach.

No, nothing, he assured her; a piece of insolence, an infamous trick some villain had tried to play, and that had staggered him for the moment, as such insults may do.

Who could have written thus insultingly to him? she asked, puzzled. Joe answered vaguely: there was no signature, but he thought he knew; suspected, at least, some one formerly in his employ, and who had been turned off rather summarily for misconduct. He urged her, almost fiercely, to say no more about the mat-

ter, and she could but comply. No further hint or clue would he breathe.

But how should she forget the violence, the towering indignation his face had shown as he tore the paper into little bits and flung them into the fire? The writer, whoever he might be, had best not have come in his way just then. Cressida shrank from alluding to the incident, the mere mention of it put him in such a rage. He exerted himself to appear to have put it out of his head, but did not get over the ruffling effect all that evening. And though by the next day his lurking exasperation had somewhat abated, she surmised that he must be suffering still from the vexation and annoyance—something at least that made him grave and taciturn, and unlike himself.

‘Is it anything about money affairs?’ she ventured, in desperation.

‘No, no!’ he exclaimed. But from his expression it appeared clearly that there was that in this simple question which had stung him afresh; a trifle that might well have set her pondering.

She did think awhile, and one or two unpleasant ideas suggested themselves. But it was all wild conjecture, and Joe’s manner towards herself led her to conclude rather that her misgivings were entirely unfounded.

The subject was dropped. They were busied with the final arrangements for leaving, and Cressida, seeing that Joe had quite recovered his equanimity, ceased to think of the disturbing occurrence.

But the very last evening he astounded her again. This time it was by suddenly, without any preamble, blurting out a proposal that they should abandon the Paris scheme, and start instead

for Seacombe at once. The disappointment that came into her face at the idea was unlimited. There was some excuse. When you have made up your mind to a plan, and have been looking forward to it, preparing for it, and it is just about to come off, you are an angel if you can let it go at the eleventh hour, and keep your temper too. Could anything be more trying? She exclaimed in dismay, entreating to know if he was in earnest.

'Why is your heart so set upon it?' said Joe constrainedly.

'O,' she replied enthusiastically, 'I know I should enjoy it so intensely. For one thing, I long to see Paris again, and there is so much going on there now that interests me—plays and operas I want to hear—things I used to love and that one misses indescribably, living all the year round in the country. You know how eager and impatient I've been getting about it. And now you don't want to go. It's just like men—to tantalise you with a thing, hold it before you in your reach, and then to throw it over at last without any reason or any warning; it isn't fair.'

'O, then, have it your own way,' said Joe, very much out of temper, as was clear. Cressida felt cross too, it must be owned.

'It is only for a week or ten

days,' she said pleadingly. 'I think you might endure it for that time. Besides, I thought you wanted to see this exhibition of machinery and things.'

'So I did,' he returned bluntly; 'but I've changed my mind. At least, I'd rather go for the whole time to Seacombe.'

'There,' she said, with a sigh of impatience, 'I wish you had never consented—let one build upon it. If you meant to give it up in this way, for nothing, you might have warned one at first.' The tears had come into her eyes, which was childish, she knew; but feeling unable to check, though ashamed of, them, she rose hastily and left the room.

Joe smote his forehead with helpless impatience. He was a great blunderer, he saw; but what was he to do? Others have blundered, feeling as he felt. He wanted to deprive Cressida of this pleasure, and could not tell her why. Not for the world. Then his mind grew gloomy and confused; for when he came to think of his reasons he was ashamed of them. That some vile anonymous reptile of a slanderer should have power to twist and turn his purposes about, seemed a contemptible confession of weakness. Well, he would go. To admit that there could be a valid reason for staying was worse than all.

(To be continued.)

CLUB CAMEOS.

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THERE are few things more puzzling to the unsophisticated mind than the manner in which certain people, without any definite means of subsistence, manage to live. We know that such persons have no profession, that no kind relations have put their names down for handsome legacies, that they are social waifs and strays, not clearly belonging to anybody and anything; yet they appear always to be amply supplied with the goods of this world, and freely to enjoy the pleasures thereof. If they are married they live in the most charming of *bijou* establishments, give excellent dinners, where the male element somewhat predominates, drive in the easiest and most miniature broughams, ride the cleverest of hunters in the shires and the most perfect of hacks in the Park, and are always to be met with in the haunts that Fashion specially selects for her amusement—yachting in the Solent, drinking from the Elizabeth Brünner at Homburg, bathing at Eastbourne, renting the most comfortable of quarters at Melton, sojourning in all the best continental hotels, wintering in Paris, Nice, Cannes, Pau, Hyères, Madeira, and everywhere maintaining a rate of expenditure of several thousands a year. How do they do it? We know that the husband was 'broke' in the Goodwood of 18—, and that his wife had nothing; how, then, do they exist in comfort and splendour? They belong to that class of social riddles which is insoluble, and which no fellow

can understand. On the other hand, if they are bachelors they give their address at one or two good clubs, they are clad in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day. They have their stall at the Opera and their hack for the Row, they are not content with the club points at whist, and they always have money to entertain useful friends at the neatest of little dinners, to run over to Paris for a fortnight at a time, and to gratify the sins they most affect. Yet how is it done? We see men with good fortunes, making a lucrative practice or holding high and well-paid appointments, and yet they say candidly that they should come to signal grief did they launch themselves forth on the lavish career which is the daily life of these penniless puzzles. Again we ask, How do they do it? The answer returned is, By their wits.

At the present day the clever impecunious adventurer finds many an active sphere for his peculiar labours which was denied to his predecessor. In the olden times our friend, whose keen wit had to stand him in the stead of lofty name and handsome revenues, was either forced to open the world with his sword as a soldier of fortune, or to ingratiate himself, under the happy feudal system, with a monarch who would offer him the requisite facilities for marrying an heiress, or to descend to the tricks and cunning of the downright knave. He could punt over the green cloth at games

of hazard, it is true ; but your man who has to live by his wits can seldom afford to play unless he has a decided advantage over his opponent ; he is willing to keep the bank, to play whist or *écarté* ; a game of skill is an income to him, whilst a game of pure chance defeats his calculations and renders superior knowledge valueless. But in these easier later times there are numerous roads and convenient bypaths which lead to the Temple of Fortune—the Temple of Honour is behind the Temple of Fortune. A knowledge of horseflesh can in itself be employed so as to gain a comfortable annuity ; a crack ‘gentleman jock’ need not necessarily be a pauper ; and as for the income that can be obtained from whist, from *écarté*, from billiards, from pigeon-shooting, and from making a book on the different races, they may vary, according to the capital and capacities of the ‘sportsman,’ from one thousand to any number of thousands a year. The man who has to live by his wits, provided he be not ashamed of the profession and his nerve and talent fit him for the career, need scarcely nowadays grumble at the opportunities afforded him for distinction—and perhaps notoriety. There are plenty of pickings for the rook ; the fox seldom prowls about in vain ; and the fold is so feebly guarded that the wolf almost now wants a whet for his appetite. The creed of the survival of the fittest is an excellent arrangement for the fittest ; to those, however, who are not in that category it is perhaps open to objection.

Among the predatory individuals who are especially created, as it were, to live upon their fellow-men, Davie Johnson will always occupy a prominent place. No one knows who he is, what

his parentage is, what locality gave him birth, or what his available means of subsistence are. He is the child of mystery, nor does he ever attempt to raise the veil except when he vaguely alludes to ‘his people in the north ;’ but whether he means the north of England or the north of Scotland or the north of London none of us whom he honours with his acquaintance has ever been able to discover. If I might venture upon a suggestion, I fancy he knows more about the people of the east than of the north, from the nature of the monetary transactions he occasionally indulges in. Yet Davie, in spite of the secrecy with which he envelops his social surroundings, is quite a representative man of his order at the Caravanse-ai. At a glance you can tell to what calling he belongs. To the observing mind nothing is simpler than to identify a man with his profession. A hundred tricks of gait, attire, and talk reveal the soldier and the sailor. Without his white tie and black garb the parson, disguise himself as he may, is soon discovered. You can tell a barrister by the way he trims his whiskers, pulls about his nose, and rises and sits down. What tutored eye ever fails to recognise the solicitor, the doctor, the clerk, and the City man ? All have peculiar movements and expressions inseparable from their walk in life, and which stamp them with the trade-mark of their calling. And who could ever make a mistake about Davie Johnson ? In his bell-shaped hat, so glossy and so curly ; in the small keen whiskerless face ; in the tie, sporting yet not loud ; in the frock-coat, fitting like a glove to his thin supple figure ; in the tight trousers, the gait, and the gaiters and varnished boots, you read as plainly

as if it were labelled on his back, Horseflesh. No one who does not spend much of his time in the saddle could walk with that peculiar style, and no one save he whose figure is always in strict training could be so emaciated and yet so powerful. Standing little above five feet two, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh upon him, apparently as slight as a girl, there are few who can surpass him in those feats which require both strength and dexterity for their accomplishment. The raking chestnut which carries him so well amid the pastures of Leicestershire, and which is the admiration of the grooms at the George, knows the utter futility of attempting to free herself from the iron hands that never move from her withers. The favourite pupil of Alick Reed, there are few more awkward customers to encounter at a bout with the gloves than Davie—who quicker than he at out-fighting or more clever in avoiding a rally? To watch him 'on the bench' handling an unruly team is a study of strength, tact, and patience; how soon the restive wheelers and the recalcitrant leaders find out that obstinacy is a mistake, and put an end to their opposition by stepping as well together as if they had been accustomed to leave Piccadilly every morning at ten and trot back in the evening at seven. Watch Davie turn in to scale after a three-mile match, '10st. 7lb. each, owners up,' over a stiffish hunting country: he is as cool and calm as if he had just come out of his morning tub, whilst his opponent is breathing like a walrus and streaming like a waterfall. Many a broad-shouldered powerful Goliath has had to acknowledge himself beaten by the endurance of this effeminate-looking David on the moors of

Scotland, amid the streams of Norway and Canada, on the track of the big game, and wherever sport and pluck cater for disciples. 'It is all a question of condition,' he says quietly; 'the only difference between me and other men is that I am always in condition, whilst other men only occasionally are. A man says he will ride against me or run me for a mile or row against me from Putney to Mortlake, and forthwith he goes into severe training, and then the moment the match is over he drops back to his old life: drives late, takes brandies-and-sodas, eats too much, sleeps too much, drinks too much, everything too much, and substitutes mooning for exercise. It is not the training does a man harm; it is the life he leads *after* the training, the sudden revulsion from an organised asceticism to unbridled luxury. I am always in training, and my weight does not fluctuate a pound in a twelvemonth. It is true I sit up late—except when I am going to ride or men have made some match or other for me—but as I never smoke and seldom drink it affects me less than it otherwise might. Besides, a man who is always taking severe exercise does not require much sleep. It is your idle, well-fed, luxurious man about town who is always ready for a slumber. The prize pig cannot keep awake; a few hours' sleep is ample for the racehorse.'

He has need for this asceticism. What wealth, rank, and education are to other men, coolness, temperance, and endurance are to Davie. His physical qualities are his stock-in-trade, and should his nerve fail or he damage himself permanently steeplechasing he would, metaphorically, have to put the shutters up and take the benefit of the act. Though he

insures heavily in the 'Accidental,' the sum he would receive in case of mutilation or incapacity would, I fear, be but a poor compensation for the loss of income he would sustain. What Davie's income is it is difficult to ascertain, but it must be considerable. A man cannot lead the life he does, ride the horses he does, play the points he does, know the men he does, or undertake the financial operations he does, without having at his disposal a large amount of ready money. How does he amass it? If you study his career the reply is not difficult to find. And to me Davie is a study, and on the whole not an unprofitable one. In these days of fierce competition, when every calling is crowded with pushing, eager, greedy followers, every man who comes to the front has something of great merit in him. He may not have all the brilliant qualities his friends allege, but assuredly he is not the wretched *vin ordinaire* his enemies declare. In his own peculiar vocation Davie is a prominent man, and consequently a successful one. My acquaintance with him is slight, but whenever we meet he is always agreeable, and I am under obligations to him for picking me up the handsomest roan cob that was ever trotted out at the Ranelagh for a mere song. Nor do I fail to confess that there is much in Davie which calls forth my admiration. I respect his skill, his courage, his manly tastes and the splendid self-control he always exhibits. I have never seen him lose his temper, and I have never heard a word breathed against his honour, honour nowadays being confined to the fulfilment of all pecuniary obligations. If he rides, he rides to win, and rigidly eschews all the frauds of the turf. When he shoots at Wormwood Scrubs

he means to kill his bird, and it is through no fault or conspiracy of his if the blue-rock flies over the enclosure. His debts of honour are always scrupulously paid. When you make a bet with him he does not pretend to do you a favour, and then give you a point below the current odds. You may safely play *écarté* with him so far as scoring the king is concerned, though there are few men at the *Méditerranée* who better know the game. If he sells you a horse he will make his profit on the transaction, but you will get a better animal and at a lower figure than from the dealers. In short Davie knows the world so well as to be fully alive to the advantages to be gained by having the reputation of a good character. Honesty is not only morally the best policy, but also pecuniarily.

The social position that Davie occupies is, as I have said, a mystery to those of his acquaintance. He never speaks of his relations or of his early days, and that in itself is always suspicious. Men as a rule have no objection to let their fellows know to whom they belong, where they have been educated, and what county is their home; it is only the adventurer who is silent on such subjects. To repeat the rumours as to Davie's origin which gossips and calumny indulge in is idle. According to some, the bar sinister lies across his escutcheon; according to others, his parentage is legitimate, but his father was a convict, an unfrocked priest, a hatter, a horse-coper, a bankrupt Manchester warehouseman, a barrister, an undertaker, a soldier, a sailor, a tinker, a tailor; all which simply proves that my friend knows how to keep his own counsel; and that the world, as it always does when it is in utter ignorance about anything, substi-

tutes imagination for information. Whatever may be Davie's antecedents, his social sponsor is Sir Rankesborough Gorse, the well-known sportsman and one of the pillars of the turf. Where Sir Rankesborough met Davie and how an alliance between the two sprang up are questions which the inquisitive have not yet solved. Certain it is that Davie is the managing man of Sir Rankesborough's stud and controls all its arrangements, from the purchase of the yearlings to the dismissal of the trainer. He executes all Sir Rankesborough's racing-commissions, rides when required, and his opinion is law in the stable. More than once has his judgment been confirmed against an adverse majority; and in spite of the objections of the trainer and the fears of his patron, more than once has he selected some despised and overlooked animal which has carried the 'black and silver' colours of the baronet to victory. Can we not remember the hostility of the ring against Whitesocks, and how severe were the comments of the learned in horseflesh upon his somewhat abject appearance? yet Davie never once faltered in his decision, and, as we all know, the mare won 'the Guineas' in the commonest of can- ters. A knowledge of the noble animal is a great gift, and Davie ranks second to none in the possession of that information. Dealers know better than to palm off any of their dodges upon 'Sir Rankesborough's man'—their flattery, their doctoring, and all their cunning never deceive the keen cold eye that takes in at a glance both the character of the vendor and the points of the animal. I will back Davie to pick up a horse cheaper and sell it at a better profit than any man in England, whilst never incurring

any after reproaches from the purchaser.

The intimacy between Sir Rankesborough Gorse and David Johnson is one of those friendships which benefit both the contracting parties. Since Davie has had the control of the baronet's stable the 'black and silver' have had no cause to complain; race after race has fallen to Sir Rankesborough's colours, till his lot have become the idols of the public. He has not yet won a Derby, but there is a certain yearling, bought by Davie at Marden Park a few weeks ago, which will, I am sure, astonish the beholders when he makes his appearance on the Downs. To win a Derby is the one soul-absorbing ambition of my friend—an ambition which, unless I grievously mistake, will be gratified when that yearling aforesaid strips in the paddock. On the other hand, 'the f'la that Sir Rankesborough picked up' has been admitted into a social atmosphere which, under less happy circumstances, he would not breathe. It is through Sir Rankesborough that he was elected a member of the Caravanserai and of the Verdure; it is through his connection with Sir Rankesborough that he gathers together the select specimens of *la jeunesse dorée* of our capital that are to be met with round his hospitable dining-table at Long's Hotel; it is to Sir Rankesborough that he owns his introduction to the messes of all the crack regiments in the kingdom; in short, without the baronet, Davie would have remained a little stagnant puddle, isolated and alone, and hopelessly cut off from mingling with the brilliant stream of life. Yet Davie, large as is his acquaintance, is essentially a man's man. Walk with him in the Park, and it is astonishing the number of friendly

greetings that he has to acknowledge; but he has never an occasion to remove his hat, for not a bonnet bows to him in graceful salutation. Men ask him freely to dinner at their clubs, but never dream of taking him home and introducing him to their wives and sisters. You meet him at bachelors' boxes, not at country houses. Whenever Davie talks about ladies he calls them 'modest women'—which the spiteful say shows that he knows very little of society. Intimate as he is with Sir Rankesborough, he no more knows Lady Mildred Gorae than her ladyship's house-steward or head-groom. Nor does Davie object to this exclusion. Whether the society of ladies would bore him, or he is conscious of his social shortcomings, or whatever be the reason, he never seems hurt that his most intimate acquaintance keeps the women of his household from him, nor does he ever attempt to push his way into drawing-room or boudoir. He is quite content with his position in life and the manner he has played his cards, and he no more regrets that the doors of society are shut upon him than does a ring-man at Ascot that he is not admitted into the royal enclosure. Not that Davie is in any way objectionable, for, on the contrary, he is far more modest and presentable than many of his betters who have the *entrée* of the best houses in the town. If he is not 'a gentleman' he is an excellent imitation of the article, and if in manners, dress, and appearance somewhat horsey, in tone of honour and in sense of self-respect he is often the superior of those who sneer at him as 'the fellow Sir Rankesborough picked up.' The position occupied by Davie is, however, not an exceptional one. There are many men

in London who, from their talents, their skill, their amusing qualities, their special knowledge of special subjects, live on the surface of society, comfortably, perhaps brilliantly, yet, by some tacit understanding between them and with those they come in contact, they never seek to penetrate deeper. A frontier line is drawn, and it must not be overstepped. The club, the suite of chambers, the hunting-box, the shooting-box, the moor, the deer-forest, the yacht, as much as you please; but the drawing-room requires credentials which it is not given to every one to possess. That passport is not among Davie's papers.

However uncertain and nondescript may be the social position of Davie, there can be no question as to the certainty and substantiality of his income. In these days of overcrowded competition, when the professions are thronged, and commerce is venturesome, save to the large capitalist, a man might do worse, so far as money is concerned, than follow in the steps of Davie. The occupation of the *viveur* upon his wits is, however, not the simple matter it may appear to the ignorant. As the barrister has to study law, as the doctor has to walk the hospitals, as the merchant has to learn the duties of a clerk, and as the tradesman begins by being an apprentice, so men like Davie have to acquire their part and perfect themselves by severe application. That consummate skill in all their accomplishments, that steadiness of nerve, that coolness of head which neither the excitement of success intoxicates nor the mortification of failure irritates, that power of enduring fatigue, that pluck and strength, are not obtained without continual practice and the severest application. Watch Davie at Sandown or Croydon, at

Liverpool or Warwick: with what judgment he rides, what patience he has, how well he knows when to force the running and when to wait upon his horses, and how exactly at the right time does he make his effort and scores another victory for the black and silver! Have that skill and judgment been obtained by aught than the severest labour? Watch Davie at the Gun Club when he has backed himself to win a heavy sweepstake, or is pitted in a match against a formidable continental dove-slayer—the roar of the ring never disturbs him, the hopes of his admirers never fluster him, the consciousness of the fact that success may mean a fortune and defeat a heavy loss never ruffles his equanimity; he takes his breech-loader calmly from the man, surveys the brazen-throated book-makers with a smile, makes a few additional bets, perhaps, as he takes up his position, then, ‘Are you ready?’ ‘Pull!’ covers his bird, and the day must be very bad, or the blue rock wonderfully wild, if it does not fall a victim on the sward. How many hours must he have spent before he educated his eye to attain that unerring aim! Again, watch Davie at billiards: how softly he plays his ‘cannons’ and makes his ‘hazards,’ and always manages to leave nothing on the table for his opponent! At pool, too, who more dead at taking ‘lives,’ or who more clever in nestling himself under the cushion, than he? But it is perhaps at whist that his peculiar gifts are the most dazzling. He has all the qualities necessary for a whist-player of the very first class—a splendid memory, a perfect temper, a clear head never clouded by the fumes of wine or tobacco (O those after-dinner rubbers!), great powers of combination and concentration, and a lightning

quickness for drawing inferences. He plays high—the loss of a bumper at the Verdure is no joke—and when as confident in his partner as he is in his own genius, he does not scruple to back himself to a considerable extent. Yet his self-control never deserts him. Your true-born Englishman, as a rule, when he is winning stops and pockets his gains, whilst he will back his ill-fortune to any extent, and plunge deeper and deeper, in the hopes of regaining his losses.

Davie is wiser in his generation. When in luck he soon rushes his opponents into money. ‘The great art of gambling,’ he says, ‘is to avoid losing your own coin, and to play boldly when Fortune favours you with your gains.’ This theory he carries into practice. When he loses three rubbers running or five games of *écarté* straight off he withdraws from the table. ‘I wish whist,’ he remarks, ‘to last me all my life, and if you lose three rubbers running, luck is against you, and you may, if you continue, lose another ten. No matter what points you play, to take up bad hand after bad hand interferes with your play and robs you of the pleasure of the game.’ Like most men who gamble, Davie is a believer in *luck*; and, however much one may be unable logically to demonstrate that there is such a thing, there can be no question as to the fact of its existence. Any one who plays cards must have noticed how often Fortune clings to one man or to certain seats during an evening, whilst ill-luck of the most persistent description marks another man or the opposite seat for its own. Why? How? Who can tell? Watch the lucky man: what honours he holds, what cards he has, and how well he is always

supported by his partner! The unlucky man, on the other hand, cannot escape from his temporary bad fortune; he may call for fresh cards, he may change his seat, he may adjure the fickle goddess by all the strangest forms of propitiation, yet the spell cannot be broken. Since I have heard Davie's observation, how often have I seen a man who loses three rubbers running continue to lose, and how often have five adverse games at *écarté* developed into ten and more! In all speculations nothing is certain; but as luck is on the whole even in its operations, he who is a good whist-player, and who declines to follow a run of misfortune, cannot fail to rise up a winner at the end of the year. Hence to Davie whist alone is an annuity.

The young men to whom Davie is somewhat of an idol often speculate at the Caravanseraï as to the sums he makes in a year. That he amasses wealth cannot be doubted. He is one of those men who whatever they touch turns into coin. What arrangements Sir Rankesborough enters into with him we know not; but he must draw a handsome share of the profits of the stable in addition to the sums he independently backs himself for when confident of his mount. From billiards and pool alone he must derive the income of a county court judge. Whist yields him large profits, which are considerably increased by his operations of systematically laying 'five to two.' 'I began,' he openly admits, 'with a capital of one thousand pounds—my capital has remained intact, and my profits quite satisfy my modest requirements. To any man in search of a livelihood, I recommend the profession of laying five to two. The odds are always eagerly taken and seldom

landed. Let a man begin with a capital of one hundred pounds and systematically lay five pounds to two—using of course his judgment when to decline—and he will preserve his capital untouched, and make without difficulty three hundred a year.' Davie lays fifty to twenty, therefore the profits he derives from his proceedings can easily be ascertained by a simple sum of rule of three. Having an extensive acquaintance with men, the books he makes on all the large races must allow him after every meeting to place a handsome sum at his bankers'. Nor are the prizes at the Gun Club to be despised. Of late dark gentlemen with almond eyes, beaky noses, curly locks, and moist yellow complexions have been seen coming out of Davie's chambers, and I hear that my active young friend has recently taken to utilise his capital by indulging in certain very profitable speculations in land. Thus what with riding, betting, cards, billiards, pigeon-shooting, and backing himself generally for anything that he is likely to win, Davie must turn over an income of some ten thousand a year at the very least. Knowledge is power, and the possession of wits is wealth. I do not say that the career is a perfectly reputable one—yet Davie has never been guilty of anything disreputable—still it has the advantage of being open to all who are endowed with the requisite physical and intellectual gifts. *Mon ami*, if you can ride like Archer, play billiards like Cook, play whist like Cavenish, make a 'book' like the Leviathan, and at the same time have the self-control of St. Anthony, the clear-headedness of Euclid, the judgment of Solomon, and the patience of Penelope, you will be no bad imitation of David Johnson, Esquire, of the North.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GUESTS OF THE ANTS.

THE night passed over more peacefully for me than the first had done. No noise or incident of any kind disturbed my repose. If the watch went their rounds in the night I did not hear them. Meg came to wake me as she had done the previous day, and brought me as before a large piece of sugar for breakfast. I asked her what she had been doing when out of my sight yesterday, and she replied that she had been amongst the audience at the concert I had given, that she had assisted at my triumph, had rejoiced with me, and had been much complimented on account of the distinguished artist she had been the means of introducing.

'I must warn you, though,' she went on, 'that you have made a few enemies. I am told that you were present yesterday at a fight between a bombardier beetle and a dozen of our people, a fight in which the latter were worsted,

and that you shouted "Bravo!" to the victor. Is this true?'

'There is some truth in it,' I replied, 'but I protest against the interpretation which has been given to a somewhat thoughtless exclamation of mine, which had reference less to the vanquisher of the ants than to his wonderful mode of defending himself. Are you acquainted with the ways of bombardier beetles?'

'Perfectly. The ants which attacked one yesterday were inexperienced young things, who did not know with whom they had to deal. As for the share you took in the matter, I advise you to be more careful in future. Ants, especially young ants, are very sensitive, and without intending it you might be drawn into an awkward quarrel.'

At this moment the recollection of the spider's warning flashed across my mind: 'Beware how you tread on their corns,' she had

said, and I felt that she had been right.

I assured Meg that I would now exercise the greatest circumspection in my dealings with her fellow-citizens, and she fully approved my resolution.

As soon as I had finished breakfast we left my room, to continue our inspection of the colony, of which I had as yet only seen the upper chambers reserved to the eggs, larvæ, and pupæ. As I followed Meg I was able to note more closely than I could the previous evening all the details of the construction of the ants' nest.

My room, as I have already stated, was situated on the basement of the establishment, that is to say on a level with the large hall, which was built actually on the old beech trunk, serving as its floor.

I noticed that the colony was built partly above and partly below the level of the ground.

The roads, the cells, and the store-rooms of the subterranean portion were hollowed out of the soil, which had accumulated about the trunk after the felling of the huge tree, of which it had formed the base.

The upper part of the nest was, however, entirely the work of its inhabitants, who had built it up of an innumerable quantity of twigs and sticks arranged so as to form passages, rooms, and cells of every variety of size, all presenting considerable solidity, and so constructed as to keep the rain out almost entirely.

'Our town,' Meg informed me, 'is very ancient. The time of its foundation is lost in the mists of antiquity, and tradition is mute as to even the approximate date of its origin.'

'But,' I observed, 'has there been nothing in its history to

mark its chronology? Has no event occurred to break the ordinary routine of its existence.'

'O, of course,' answered Meg, 'we have had frequent revolutions, risings, *coups d'états*, and so forth. There have been street-fights, massacres, murders, crimes of every variety. We have had wars too with the neighbouring republic. We have often been invaded, and have only purchased peace at an enormous sacrifice. An ant's life is not all *couleur de rose*. One day—it was ever so long before I was born, but the story was handed down from the old folks, who heard it from their elders—a terrible catastrophe all but did for our colony. It came one morning. Our people were busy as usual carrying the eggs, larvæ, and pupæ to the upper story, when a sudden shock shook the whole place to its foundation. The terror produced by this extraordinary event had not subsided when a second, more violent than the first, told the horror-stricken inhabitants that a crisis had come. At the same moment a sinking took place in the upper stories, and the ants realised that part of them had been actually swept away. The cause of this remarkable event soon became evident: our ancestors were attacked by the most formidable of all our enemies—in a word, by a man !'

'A man ! And for what reason ?'

'To carry off the pupæ.'

'What did he want with them ?'

'To give them to birds to eat. You know that many birds, especially young pheasants, nightingales, and others, which are often kept in captivity, are very fond of them, and men persecute us for their sakes. But to go on with my story: it was a very long time before the colony rallied from the misfortune which had overtaken it, and it was several years before

the nest, so cruelly ravaged, regained its old prosperity.'

'Those human monsters have no consideration for us insects. And yet we are of service to them.'

'O, they think and call themselves the lords of creation.'

'And there is nobody to contradict them.'

'Well,' observed Meg, 'there's no denying that they are stronger, and I suppose I must also admit more intelligent, than we are. There is nothing on our side but superiority of numbers. I have been told that in some countries we have literally driven them before us, and compelled them to cede the soil to us.'

'Well,' I replied, 'I have never heard tell of men running away from crickets, but I have been told that some cousins of ours, locusts I think they are called, have often given them a good deal of trouble.'

'Have they indeed?'

'Yes; they sometimes come in such numbers that the light of the sun is darkened, they settle here and there about the country, and when they fly away leave absolute desolation behind them. I expect men are the chief sufferers then.'

Chatting thus we reached those parts of the ants' nest which I had not yet visited or had only hurried through.

'I must introduce you to our visitors,' said my companion, 'and you will see that the reputation we have for inhospitality is unfounded. And first, look at that rose-beetle larva; there are some twenty like it here.'

I looked, and there, lying in a big cell, lay the white hairy grub I had noticed the previous evening.

'From time immemorial,' said Meg, 'rose-beetle grubs have enjoyed our hospitality. Have you ever seen rose-beetles, Cricket?'

'O, yes, often; they are those pretty bright green coleoptera which frequent flowers. I had no idea, though, that their larvæ lived with you.'

'Those of one species of their family spend the whole of their lives, two or three years, amongst us, and so do their pupæ.'

'Are they useful to you?'

'For all I know, not very.'

'I wonder that you keep them with you.'

'What would you have us do? We are used to them; we remember seeing them here from our very birth. They have acquired a right to our hospitality somehow, you may be sure. Our grandparents tolerated them, so we do the same.'

'And those others walking about there with their bodies enclosed in a kind of sheath?'

'Those are the larvæ of ant-beetles.'

'Ah, indeed; they are also coleoptera: then I saw some of the perfect insects near here yesterday.'

'Do you mean yellow insects, with four black spots on their bodies?'

'Yes.'

'Their larvæ relieve us of the cocoons of our pupæ when they have become useless, after the metamorphosis of their inmates, so that you see they are useful to us.'

'Why do they wear the kind of sheath in which their bodies are hidden?'

'O, I'm sure I don't know, unless it's as a protection to their skin, which is very thin. It's a family custom. The larvæ of other members of the clythridæ family, which don't live with us,—there are a good many different species—and those of their cousins, and those of the cryptocephalidæ, another numerous tribe, inhabit a solid shell, which they carry

about with them everywhere, as snails do theirs.'

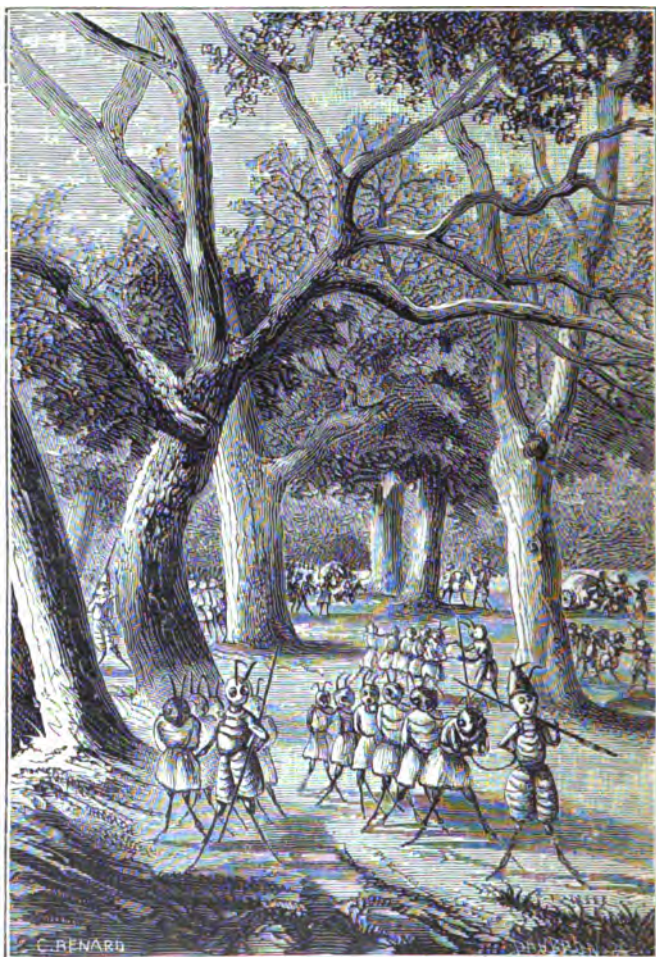
'Like the caddis-fly larvæ which we saw in the pond?'

'Yes; and like a whole lot of the lepidoptera which go by the name of moths.'

'It's not a bad idea, either.

But to return to your guests: you have none but larvæ here?'

'Haven't we, though? Why, we have ever so many different varieties of the staphylinidæ family. Look, there are lomechusæ, aleocharæ, myrmedoniæ, homolotæ, tachypori, and conuri. They all



make themselves useful to us by removing the disused cocoons of pupæ and the emptied skins of larvæ. They save us the trouble of removing all that rubbish; in a word, they perform the office of scavengers.'

'Whatever are those?' I inquired of Meg, pointing to some little bright yellow beetle of rather peculiar forms, which were walking along very slowly.

'Those are claviger beetles.'

'To judge by the size of their

antennæ their sense of hearing must be very acute.'

'Fortunately for them it is, for they are blind.'

'Blind!'

'Of course they are, for they have no eyes.'

'Of what use are they to you, then?'

'They secrete a liquid for us to drink, a kind of syrup with a delicious taste, so of course we take great care of them and think very highly of them. But let us go on. You see those little stag-beetles down there?'

'Yes, I see them; but I thought all stag-beetles lived in dung or dead animals. You support them as well, then?'

'A few; they render us the same services as the staphylini.'

'Why, look, there are some plant-lice!' I exclaimed, catching sight of a gallery quite full of those little insects. 'I did not expect to find them here.'

'Ha, ha! We are trying an experiment with them.'

'An experiment! What experiment?'

'Well, I'll explain. You must know that plant-lice, like claviger beetles, secrete a syrup of which we are very fond, which is contained in those two little tubes projecting from their tails. Whenever we find them on plants we tickle them with our antennæ to make them give us this syrup, which they can exude at will, and which they are, for the matter of that, quite ready to let us have. Now several families of ants living under the grass conceived the idea of keeping plant-lice with them to save themselves the trouble of going to fetch the syrup, and some of our young people have taken it into their heads to do the same. They won't succeed, as I have warned them, but they don't listen to me.'

'Why won't they succeed?'

'Because to keep plant-lice they must be able to feed them. The little ants who live under the grass place their plant-lice on the grass roots which penetrate into their passages. We are not similarly situated; we have no vegetable roots inside our nest; and as plant-lice can only live on the sap of plants, those you see there must die of hunger, which our young people don't seem to understand.'

'The young seldom will profit by the experience of the old. Experience must be bought. But what do I see there? More little beetles?'

'Yes; those are the small fry amongst our guests. They are cryptophagi, monotomi, lathridæ, &c. They all live on our leavings.'

'Just now I saw some black ants working amongst your people. How did they get here?'

'They are prisoners. We had a war a little while ago with some black ants living in the trunk of a tree not far from here. We beat them, and all the survivors were carried into captivity.'

'They don't seem to be ill-treated in any way.'

'O, no, they are not. They work with us, and we treat them just as if they belonged to our nation.'

'Do they regret the loss of their nationality?'

'They don't seem to. Most of them were hatched here, you see, they were brought here as pupæ; they find themselves very comfortable, and don't trouble themselves about what you are pleased to call the loss of their nationality.'

Chatting thus we arrived at one of the entrances of the ant-hill. The weather was still fine, and the carrying out of the larvæ and pupæ was going on as usual.

I asked Meg if there was no fear of their being carried off by birds from such an exposed situation.

'O, we are not afraid of that,' was the answer, 'though a good many birds—nightingales, for instance—are very fond of our pupæ. You see to get at them here they would have to settle on the ant-hill, which they would not do with impunity. They don't care to run the risk of that. It would only be in case of our having to move that we should be in danger from the birds. During the war

with the black ants, which I was just telling you about, they carried off half the pupæ we had captured. But here we are in the open air; go and give us a little more music up there; I must be off to my work.'

I took up the position I had occupied the day before and began to sing. I was quite as successful as I had been at first, but the novelty of my performance had worn off, and instead of an ovation I only received a little applause.



CHAPTER XX.

WAR.

SEVERAL days passed by without any incident worthy of note. I gave my usual concert every morning, and then walked about until the evening.

I saw the cicendela larvæ again, and I also met a good many other

insects, whose habits interested me deeply; but, not to spin out my narrative too much, I pass them over in silence, to tell of an event which suddenly put an end to the peaceful life I was leading amongst the ants.

'One evening I was barricading my door as usual for the night when Meg came in, and without prelude observed, with an air of mystery,

'We are going to war.'

'What!' I cried, 'to war! And with whom?'

'With the neighbouring republic.'

'And what is the *casus belli*?'

'O, a mere question of feeling. It seems that the populations of both states have increased greatly, and that the wood has grown too small for them; frontier squabbles are of daily occurrence. We have not troubled ourselves about it hitherto, but the insolence of our neighbours is beginning to exceed all bounds, and our forbearance is taken for fear. Well, to be brief, this morning a party of the enemy made an inroad on our territory, and in trying to repulse them our people, who were not in full force, were obliged to retreat in disorder. They say there are several killed and a great many wounded.'

'Well, and what then?'

'We have decided on war. There is a council being held in the public hall at this moment. There is some little opposition, there always is; but the majority are for the immediate commencement of hostilities, and our armies will probably march to-morrow morning.'

'You say the matter is now under discussion.'

'That is to say, the forms of discussion are being gone through, that we may seem to consider the arguments of dissentients, but war is virtually decided on.'

'Is the discussion public?'

'Of course it is. Would you like to be present?'

'Very much.'

'Well, then, follow me.'

Meg led the way and I followed her, feeling no little curiosity to

see a council of ants with my own eyes. After going through several passages we reached the entrance to the public hall, which I had been in on the first night of my arrival in the ant-hill.

The greatest excitement prevailed. Here and there groups of disputants were eagerly discussing the question of peace or war. Suddenly an ant demanded permission to make a speech, and silence was enforced.

'It is the leader of the opposition,' whispered Meg to me.

'Fellow - citizens,' cried the orator, 'none amongst you can accuse me of loving our republic less than another, no matter whom, but, before embarking on so terrible a venture as the step you contemplate, it will be well for us to take counsel together. If war be indeed inevitable, I shall set you all an example of devotion, and you will see me fighting in the foremost ranks.' ('Hear, hear!') 'But before taking any such extreme measures let us consider whether the offences of our neighbours really call for chastisement with the sword; let us see if matters cannot be amicably arranged. I am afraid that we have shown ourselves too susceptible.' (Interruptions.) 'I fear, I repeat, that we have shown ourselves too susceptible.' ('No, no!') 'There have been, it is true, a few skirmishes on the frontier, but they are, we know, now and then of daily occurrence; they have never yet led either us or our neighbours to plunge into a general conflict. The affair of yesterday has been made too much of, it has assumed an undue importance, and I think that if a remonstrance couched in courteous terms were addressed to our neighbours they would promptly render us that satisfaction which we have a right to demand, and we

should avoid the terrible scourge of war.'

At these words a great tumult began in the assembly. All the ants talked at once, and there was such a hubbub that it was impossible to hear oneself speak. At last, however, the noise subsided a little, and another ant ascending the platform demanded silence, and spoke in the following terms:

'Dear fellow-citizens, I am as devoted to our republic as the ant who has just been addressing you, but my devotion is of a different kind. I wish to see you all zealous for the national honour.' (Cheers.) 'True, I love peace, and I should merit universal execration if I advocated a war without due cause; but is it such a war as that that we propose declaring to-day? It is not we who have given provocation to our neighbours; it is they who by their daily insolence have driven us to bay.' ('Hear, hear!') 'We are told that a courteous remonstrance will be enough to insure the maintenance of peace; but do you know, fellow-citizens, how such a courteous remonstrance will be regarded by those to whom it is addressed? It will be looked upon as a disguised apology' (excitement); 'yes, as an apology. Do you wish us to send a deputation to our neighbours charged with an apology? Answer me, do you wish it, or do you not?'

At this a positive yell of fury echoed through the hall. The ant who had advocated peace had gradually approached one of the doors as his opponent spoke, and at the last word he realised that it was time for him to take himself off, which he did without an instant's delay. Some of the most excited of the ants began looking everywhere for him, that they might tear him to pieces.

'You were right,' I observed

to Meg. 'It was a mere form to let the leader of the opposition speak. It is evident that here, as elsewhere, the advocates of violent measures have it all their own way with the masses. They have but to bring out a few high-sounding phrases, such as the "honour of the republic," "zeal for the national dignity," "revenge for an unpardonable insult," and so forth, to crush down those who try to get a hearing for the cold and measured language of reason. I see that war is inevitable. What do you suppose will be the result?'

'Who can tell? War is but a game of chance. Our troops are brave and numerous, but those of the enemy are not less brave, and, I believe, more numerous than ours. I believe they are as anxious for war as we are, but they have managed to make us declare it, so that they may be able to proclaim us to be the aggressors. It's an old manoeuvre which always answers.'

After the second orator's speech the opposition had no chance of making itself heard. It would have been dangerous in the general excitement even to pronounce the word peace. The partisans of war had the people on their side, and although the whole burden of it would fall upon the latter, they rushed into it as blindly as common cockchafers, which are of all insects the very giddiest.

'Friend Cricket,' I said to myself, as I went back to my room, 'this is a fine lesson for you if you ever become king of the ants. You will know how the masses are swayed. A few telling attitudes and gestures, sonorous periods, empty but high-sounding words, ready-made phrases, always the same, not forgetting the judicious and appropriate introduction of a few shakes, an occasional

tremolo, and of the final C. If with all that you can't make your subjects follow you blindfold, you're no true cricket, and you're unworthy to reign.'

I slept but little that night. The whole ant-hill was in a commotion, and its inhabitants were perpetually running backwards and forwards in the passages. The marching regiments were doubtless being passed in review, that the campaign might open with daybreak.

Quite early in the morning Meg came to fetch me.

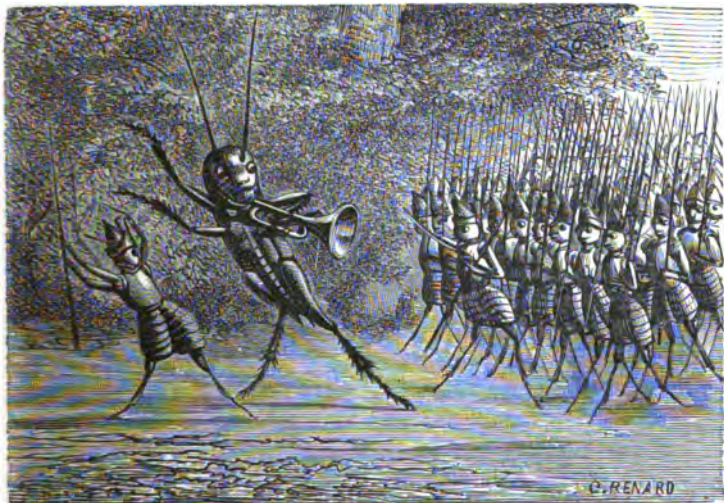
'Our troops are on the eve of starting,' she said; 'scouts have already been sent on to reconnoitre the enemy.'

'Do you suppose the enemy is aware of the expedition to be sent against him?'

'Not a doubt of it. He has his spies, who keep him informed of everything which goes on here.'

'How many men are there in your expeditionary force?'

'About two thousand; but as soon as the wood is reached the army will divide: one half will remain behind as reserve, and



only a thousand soldiers will march to meet the enemy.'

'To what corps do you belong, Meg?'

'O, I remain here; my age relieves me from active service.'

As we were talking some ants came up and held a whispered conversation with Meg.

'They wish me to ask you to accompany our troops,' she said, turning to me.

'As their leader?'

I bit my lips as Meg looked at me in surprise. I had foolishly let out my secret hopes.

'No,' she said; 'to make music for them to march to.'

'Hem, hem!'

'You really must not refuse; they rely upon you to encourage the soldiers.'

'Must I go to the scene of action?'

'You may as well. There's no need, though, for you to take part in the battle, and you remain in the rear whilst the fighting is going on.'

'I should prefer that certainly.'

Meg was here called out, but she soon came back, saying,

'They are waiting for you ; the army is about to march.'

'But I have had no breakfast.'

'Never mind that ; you will be made. You will be taken care of some food when the first halt of.'

I set out, preceded by Meg, for one of the entrances of the ant-hill. To say that I was happy in my mind would be to tell a lie. I did not at all relish the prospect of being involved in a squabble such as that about to begin. It is true I was not obliged to take an active part in the struggle ; but if I had to keep near the combatants I might at any minute be surrounded by the enemy, made prisoner, and perhaps murdered.

Once outside the ant-hill I was struck by the scene its environs presented. The ants in immense numbers were gathered about it, awaiting the signal for departure.

When I appeared a great silence fell upon them all, and every head was turned towards me. They evidently knew what office I was to hold.

With becoming gravity I climbed to the top of the ant-hill, and when there I paused for a few minutes to tune myself to the occasion.

It was for me to awake the patriotism of my audience, to extol its courage, to inflame it against the enemy, and finally to wind up with a thrilling flourish of trumpets. All this had to be done through the medium of chromatic scales and shakes ; but they say that music admirably expresses all the emotions of the soul, and that there are times when it advantageously takes the place of words.

My song must have been worthy of its subject, and have expressed all that I have said above, for it roused indescribable enthusiasm

amongst the ants. When I had brought out the final C, I heard cries from amongst the crowd of 'Long live the cricket !' and those cries were not repressed. It was a good omen for the future. After all, this war might promote my interests. I must watch events, turn everything which occurred to account, make opportunities for my own advancement—in a word, take Time by the forelock, that was all I had to do.

I was asked to take the head of the army, which I did at once, mentally resolving, however, to make some excuse for slackening my pace and letting the troops pass on before me when we should be near the enemy. It seemed to me that it was my duty not to risk in the chances of a battle a life to which a great interest might possibly be some day attached.

I was reflecting thus as I performed a war-march, and the ants in four columns followed me silently.

We soon reached the borders of the wood, and a halt was made for breakfast. Nearly all the ants had brought provisions with them, carrying them in their mandibles. Meg had not forgotten me, and I saw some soldiers approaching me, painfully dragging along a huge piece of white sugar which had been reserved for me. I mentally thanked my old friend as I did justice to the meal provided for me.

As I was eating I listened to the conversation going on about me.

The following dialogue between an old ant and a young recruit particularly interested me. The former had taken part in the expedition against the black ants, and she spoke with the authority of age and experience.

'You know, conscript,' she

said, 'I don't want to cavil at my superiors, but the fact is this campaign is being badly managed; and I am very much afraid it will be a failure. Who would have dreamt yesterday that we should be opening hostilities at dawn to-day? We rush to arms without warning, without preparation, without allies of any sort or kind, when we might so easily have secured the coöperation of the amazon ants. Then we march at haphazard, without knowing when or where we may meet the enemy. They say our leaders have a grand plan of action, but I'd bet one of my legs that they have no more plan than I have. Did you see any scouts start before us? I didn't, not a single one, and I was wandering about the ant-hill all night. I'd risk a second leg that each has left the other to see to that precaution, and that nothing has been really done.'

'According to you, then, old Gibs, we are not going to march direct upon the enemy's ant-hill?'

'March direct upon the enemy's ant-hill? Do you suppose the enemy is going to allow himself to be beaten just to cover you with glory? We are by no means secure of victory, and we shall need all our resources to come out of the affair creditably. In our last struggle with the black ants we had no little difficulty in conquering them, and what we did then was nothing to the work before us now.'

'You old people see everything in a gloomy light; does our courage, our proved courage, count for nothing?'

'O, courage is all very well as far as it goes, but what's the good of it when an army is not well commanded? And we are badly commanded—I feel it, I know it.'

'You feel it, do you? That's always the way with the old folks.

I daresay you think now that if you were our leader everything would be better managed?'

'You talk as young people do; they always are and will be presumptuous, inconsiderate, and unsuspicious. But you'll see, you'll see!'

'Yes, we shall see. Look now how quiet everything is in the wood. Not an enemy in sight. It's my belief now that we shall surprise them and fall upon them before they know where they are.'

'So that's your opinion, is it, conscript?'

'It's the opinion of the whole army.'

'So much the worse for the army. Now I think we shall be surprised ourselves presently.'

'A truce with your forebodings, prophettess of evil! Why, look there, there are the scouts coming back. Who said none had been sent?'

A few minutes later a rumour was circulating in the army that the scouts had explored the wood and had seen nothing suspicious. They had, it was true, caught sight of a few of the enemy, but they seemed to be there quite by accident, and had retreated hastily on their approach.

Old Gibs shook her head, but as the order to resume our march was given at that moment I did not hear the conclusion of her remarks.

As Meg had said, two of the four columns of which the army was composed halted at the entrance to the wood. The other, numbering some thousands, advanced under cover of the bank.

On this side the wood consisted of several different kinds of trees, beeches predominating. The ground, which was either bare or overgrown with moss, offered but few impediments to our march, so that we advanced rapidly. I remain-

ed at the head of the army and between the two columns, going on playing the war-march I had struck up when we started. Presently, however, I gradually slackened my pace, so as to allow the heads of the columns to precede me. The most profound silence continued to reign around us, and no sound awoke the echoes but that of my music.

We had now been marching a long time, and there was no sign of the enemy. Had the young conscript been right? I wondered. Had old Gibs been talking nonsense, as he had implied? I was beginning to think she had.

A hollow path now lay out before us, probably a continuation of the one I have already mentioned. It was of considerable width, and bounded on either side by very steep banks. To cross it, it would be necessary to go down the bank on our side and ascend the one opposite to us. The latter looked very rugged, and was surmounted by the projecting ridge beneath which I had taken refuge lower down in the storm a few days ago. No enemy was to be seen on the other side. Old Gibs, who now happened to be near me, again suggested to her companions that it would be well to climb a tree and reconnoitre the bank opposite to us before scaling it; but she was only laughed at for her prudence, to which another name was given, and she did not venture to insist.

The two columns of ants descended the bank like a double torrent, and in a moment the hollow path was alive with hurrying troops. I paused on the projecting brow of the bank looking down upon the ravine, waiting to cross it in my turn, till the transit should have been effected by the bulk of the army.

The ascent of the opposite bank was quickly effected, and soon the whole army was drawn up beneath the second ledge already mentioned. The perpendicular wall presented no obstacle to the ants, who immediately scaled it; but, having gained the summit, they found themselves stopped by a clump of heather, the hanging roots of which formed an insuperable barrier even to them.

Some little confusion now occurred in the ranks, owing to the precipitate descent of those who, pressing on in advance, had recognised the impossibility of further progress in that direction. From the commanding position I occupied I could see a kind of hollow in the otherwise inaccessible bank, by which the ascent to the plateau could be made by a few at a time. I was about to point out this ravine to our people when some of them perceived it, and, entering it, called to the others to follow them. The bulk of the army then halted, and a file of ants, looking like a black thread, entered the pass, which was too narrow to admit of many at once.

At the end of half an hour some four or five hundred appeared to me to have passed through—that is to say, rather less than half the effective force. At this moment I noticed a little faltering in the column in the pass, then a retrograde movement, and a little later I distinctly saw those of the ants who had gained the plateau roll down upon those behind them. What could be the meaning of this? It was soon explained. Whilst the regiments nearest the ravine were running to ascertain the cause of the interruption of the ascent, I suddenly saw the patch of heather already referred to as forming the crest of the opposite bank become alive with

ants. I could distinctly see them struggling with each other, and some of them fell back into the path where that part of the army which had not been able to reach the plateau remained motionless. We had fallen into an ambushade,

and our forces were cut in half. I now heard a dull noise from the plateau, where the struggle was probably going on with considerable slaughter; but, being on a somewhat lower level, I could see nothing of what was happening.



Many ants were still attempting to ascend the ravine, but they could not succeed. It was evident that some obstacle had been placed in it which it was impossible for them to surmount. Those which fell back from the heather

on to their companions were immediately surrounded and questioned, and it was evident that the replies elicited were of a terrifying nature, for they at once produced the greatest agitation amongst the expeditionary forces.

I saw the ants, as if seized with a sudden access of fury, clutch at the vertical wall beneath which they were massed, and struggle to scale it, only, alas, to fall back upon each other, balked by the impassable barrier of heather. Deeply moved, I was eagerly watching the scene, of which not a single detail escaped me, when my attention was suddenly called in another direction.

I have already said that from the position I occupied I commanded a view of one part of the hollow path which wound in such a manner as to admit of my seeing a long way down it on either side. At the moment referred to above I saw a dense column of ants advancing in good order from the left, and at the same time another body appeared on the right. I shouted in a shrill voice to warn our people of the threatening danger, and made signs to them to fall back towards me; but, absorbed in their vain efforts to scale the bank, they either did not see or did not understand me.

Meanwhile the two converging columns rapidly approached each other. At last they were noticed, and I saw our soldiers leave the wall they had been vainly attempting to scale, and, in the presence of a visible enemy, regain the calmness and coolness they had for the moment lost. Their new dispositions were rapidly made; and, dividing into two parties, they prepared to meet the

onslaught of the attacking columns with a vigorous repulse. The combatants all belonged to the same race; and in the hand-to-hand struggle which ensued, the two parties were so mixed together that I was at a loss to understand how they could distinguish friends from foes.

As to what would be the issue of the battle there could be not a shadow of doubt. The enemy's columns each numbered some thousands of troops, and it was impossible that our army, reduced to five hundred at the most, could long sustain so unequal a combat. In spite of their courageous resistance, they must soon be overpowered. The noise from the hollow path now drowned that from the plateau, and I could no longer make out whether the struggle on the latter was over or still going on.

The battle had lasted for some time with incredible slaughter when I suddenly saw an ant running towards me, whom I took for one of our people.

'Run, Cricket!' she cried eagerly—'run, and summon the reserve corps from the borders of the wood: you will go faster than I shall. Tell them to hasten up; things are going against us.'

With that she left me to return to the battle; whilst I, leaving the scene of carnage, where I could do nothing for my friends, bent my steps to the place where we had left the reserve corps.

(To be continued.)

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER XIV. THE WESTERN LAKES.

THE wildly beautiful harmonies of the Alpine landscape, consisting of ice-clad rocks and frozen lakes, are repeated in softer tones and calmer strains in West Switzerland, which is indeed like a gentle echo of the Oberland. This district is grouped around the Lake of Geneva or Lemman, the Lake of Neuchâtel or Neuenburg, and the slopes and valleys of the Jura. For though the 'Black Mountains' of the Jura may possess many terrors, still they are far less mighty than the Alps; and Nature's sovereign power is controlled by milder laws here, where she lies close to the warm heart of the earth, than where she sits aloft enthroned on inaccessible heights.

The upper valleys of Neuchâtel looked dreary enough in the old times, when foxes and owls abounded, and the people who dwelt in the wretched huts were not only ragged, but famishing. The surface of the ground was strewn with fragments of rock, between which there would grow a late and scanty crop of oats or barley; and on this the herdsmen and charcoal-burners managed to subsist, with the result that their bodies were as much starved as their minds. Nowadays, however, this is all changed, and everywhere there are large flourishing villages, which are almost like towns, and are inhabited by a thriving prosperous people. The railway keeps them in constant communication with the outer world, and the

telegraph brings them information concerning the great markets to which they send their produce and manufactures. The population is a busy and hard-working one, the chief branch of industry pursued being that of watch-making. Nearly thirty thousand workmen are employed about this manufacture in the villages of Neuchâtel alone, Geneva employs eight thousand, the Bernese Jura three-and-twenty thousand, and the same number are employed by Lausanne and the valley of Joux; so that altogether some eighty thousand persons, dwelling for the most part in lonely mountain-villages, are engaged day by day in dictating the time to the rest of the world.

The history of the introduction of the first watch to Chaux-de-Fonds is interesting enough. It was brought thither, towards the end of the seventeenth century, by a cattle-dealer, and excited much wonder among the herdsmen and charcoal-burners. But, alas, it had not the gift of perpetual motion, and one day there was great distress, for the wheels had stopped. Thereupon a young smith named Daniel Jean Richard, who was of an inquiring turn of mind, set himself to take the little machine to pieces. He succeeded perfectly, restored it to life, and thenceforward was possessed with the desire of making watches himself. After a thousand trials and difficulties success crowned his labours, and in the end he



SCENE IN FREIBURG.

became the father and founder of what is now a most important manufacture.

Even before they reach Geneva, natives of Northern Europe will find much to delight them in Neuchâtel and its lake—and, indeed, in the entire neighbourhood, with its villages, green mountain-slopes, and valleys. The whole aspect of the district is so pleasant that strangers speedily feel themselves quite at home in it. The smallest towns are exquisitely clean, the streets are well swept, the trim well-kept gardens are brilliant with flowers, the meadows are bordered with luxuriant fruit-trees, and the houses look radiant with prosperity, as do also the inhabitants, the expression of whose faces, notwithstanding a certain air of business-like gravity, is as cheerful as if every day were a holiday. Add to all this the heights of the Jura, which fill the background, and conceal many a golden hive full of industrious workers, and the picture is complete.

The town of Neuchâtel is the product of all these various elements combined. It is not only neat and clean, but rich and handsome; and its aspect, like that of its citizens, betokens cheerfulness, contentment, ready sociability, and much confidence in its own powers. The inhabitants were determined that their town should present a handsome appearance, and have accordingly vied with one another in their endeavours to beautify it. The necessary funds have always been forthcoming when wanted, nor has there been any lack of public spirit, or indeed of noble acts of generosity, as we are reminded by the name of David Pury, one of the greatest benefactors of the place.

The fragrant scent of the vine pervades the whole surrounding

district, and the grapes grown on the hills of this little canton are by no means the worst of their kind. The red grapes of Cortailod and Derrière-Moulins, and the white grapes of Bevaix, Auvenerier, and St. Blaise are highly appreciated in the grand hotels on the lake; and the white have no cause to blush, nor the red to turn pale, even if they should be subjected to the refined criticism of a Burgundian palate.

With Tradition for our guide, we will now proceed to Freiburg. We are in what was anciently called Uechtland—the Desert—for such it seemed to the Romans settled at what was then known as Aventicum, but is now Avenches. They did not like it at all. Dense forests, waste lands, rugged mountains, and uncultivated valleys found very few admirers among the children of Italy, in spite of the attractive character of the lake and its shores. In after years the district fell under the dominion of the German emperor, and was governed by the powerful Dukes of Zähringen, one of whom, Berchtold IV., took it into his head to imitate his uncle, who had built a town of Freiburg on the Dreisam in Breisgau, and so built one of the same name about the fortress of Thira, on the river Saane. This was in 1179, or twelve years before the founding of Bern. His desire was that the new free town should act as a check upon the overweening pride of the nobles and ecclesiastics, and to this end he granted various liberties and privileges to the citizens. But the monks of Payerne withstood him from the first; and, as soon as the new church was begun, their opposition became so actively violent that the duke was obliged to have recourse to force before he could drive them and their vassals away. They returned

again later; and, indeed, until quite recently, their convents and monasteries were more numerous in Freiburg than anywhere else. There were monks and nuns of all colours and habits—Franciscans, Augustinians, Capucins, Ursulines, Cistercians, and many others; and Freiburg was not only a stronghold of the Jesuits, but the strongest stronghold in the land.

The town of Bern had been built for much the same reasons as Freiburg, and common interests supplied a strong bond of union between the two, which was further cemented by repeated leagues and covenants.

Bern and Freiburg together threatened many a foe with their formidable power in later times; and, more than this, they used them so effectually on the field of Murten as completely to drive the Burgundians out of the country. It must have been a grand sight to see the strong and proud array which passed through the gates of Freiburg on the 25th July 1476, three days after the glorious victory of Murten, or Morat, on their way to hold a splendid sitting of the Diet of the Swiss Confederation. The Bishop of Grenoble came in full canonicals to bring the good wishes of King Louis of France, and he was followed by the Duke of Lorraine, the representatives of Austria, France, Savoy, St. Gall, Appenzell, Biel, Valais, Solothurn, and the brave warriors of the eight confederate cantons. Peace with Savoy was the question they had met to discuss; and there was not much ink wasted on the occasion. The duke gave the Pays de Vaud as a guarantee, and Freiburg and Bern received Murten, Aigle, Orbe, and Grandson.

Montreux, the Swiss Nice, in one respect resembles Interlaken—that is to say, no one exactly

knows where the place itself is, though the name is given to an extensive district. Montreux is, in fact, made up of the villages of Les Planches and Sales, and to these belong Veytaux, Chatelard, Verney, Clarens, Glion, Sonzier, Brie, and a number of others, which dot the green slopes of the Dent de Jaman down to the edge of the lake. The space between the villages is occupied by woods, vineyards, streams, groups of trees; and everywhere you may see gardeners, vine-dressers, and boatmen busily and cheerfully pursuing their various avocations. Over all there is an air of blissful peace and repose, and the place is salubrious as well as lovely. Many a person who had lost his health in the rude world without has found it again on these sunny hills; and as for the sound health of the natives, that is sufficiently attested by the lightheartedness, almost Greek in its character, with which they celebrate their festivals when their labours are over.

Talking of Greek characteristics, there is quite a classic flavour about the Narcissus Festival, which is held on the greensward belonging to the chalets of Avent, where this flower blooms in profusion in the spring-time, and invites the pleasure-loving population to make merry with dancing and singing; and the *fête* of *l'Abbaye des Vignerons*, the guild of the Vevey vine-dressers, completely recalls the time when the temples of the ancient gods were still held in honour. The vintage season is of itself provocative of jubilant mirth; but when traditions of Roman festivals held in honour of Ceres, Pales, and Bacchus survive among the people—as they do in Rome, Naples, and other parts of Italy, and even here on the shores of Lake

Leman—it is only natural that such *fêtes* should be celebrated in a manner worthy of their classical origin. The spread of Christianity has entirely done away with the festivals held in honour of all the old heathen divinities, save one, that of Bacchus, which has obstinately held its ground. Its observance was continued in Italy and Greece for long centuries, and the same may have been the case here; but, unfortunately, there is no accurate evidence as to the time and manner of its celebration, as the archives of the vine-dressers' guild were consumed by fire towards the end of the seventeenth century. It recurs at intervals of about fifteen years, and has been celebrated only five times since 1797, the last occasion being in 1865.

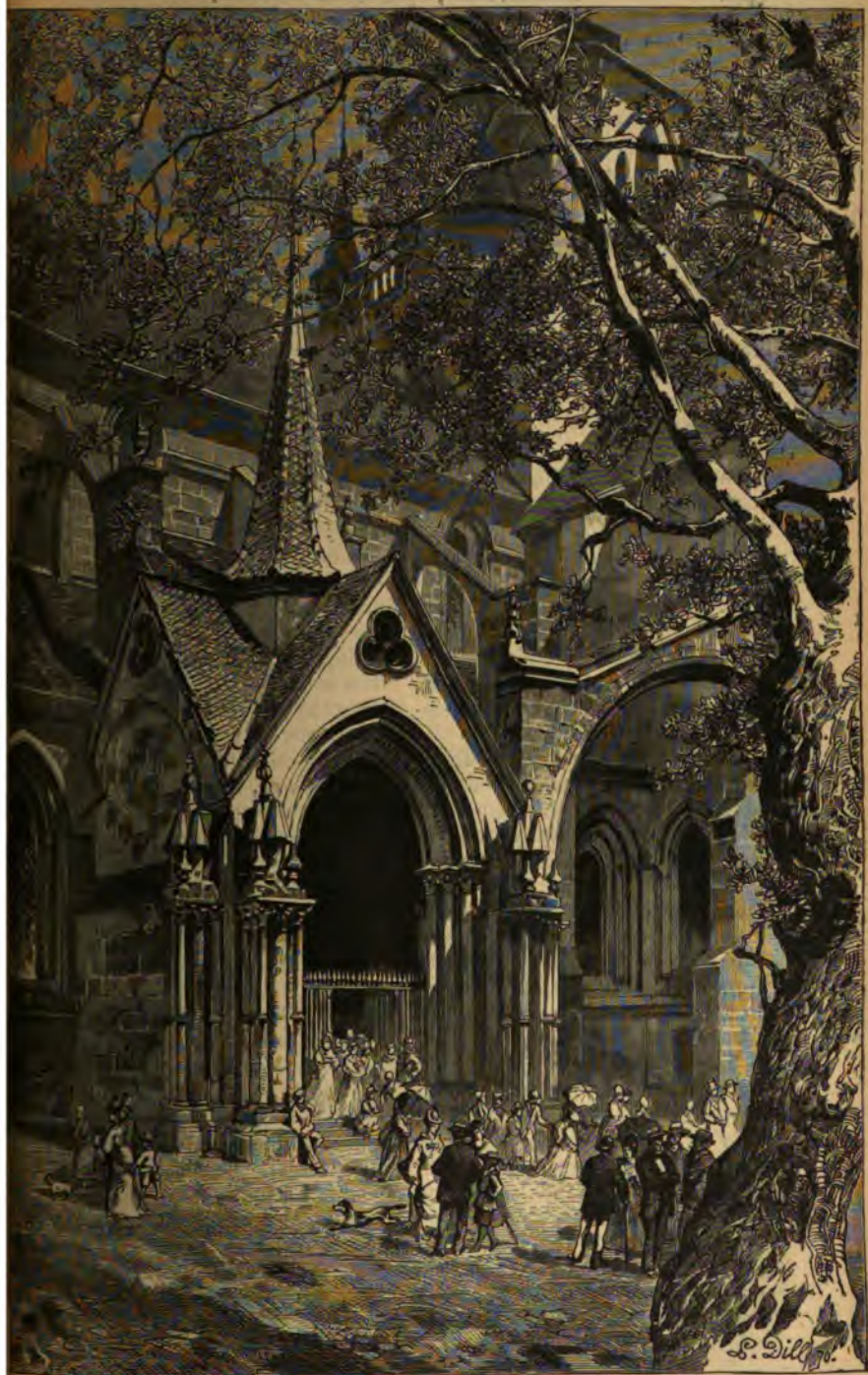
In ancient times the whole honour of the festival belonged to Bacchus; afterwards Ceres, the guardian of the cornfields, and later still Pales, the patron of the herdsmen, were admitted to a share in it, and the triple *fête* was celebrated in the middle of summer, instead of being divided between April and October, as was the case in old Rome. When the great day at last arrives, what a bustle and stir there is on the shores of the lake, on the quay, and in the streets of Vevey, and upon the open space towards which the crowds are hastening! Everywhere there are signs of exuberant mirth. Foreigners pour in from all quarters, and there is a perfect Babel of languages, for the *fête* enjoys a European reputation. Balconies, roofs, walls, and trees are all occupied by eager spectators; flags wave from the triumphal arches leading to the scene of action, trumpets sound incessantly, and the air is filled with the sweet scent of flowers. Then comes the proces-

sion. It is headed by a company of halberdiers, in the costume of the old warriors of the Confederacy, and the guild of the vine-dressers of Vevey and Tour, accompanied by their 'abbot,' carrying a bishop's crozier, whose function it is to make the customary speech and to crown the two vine-dressers who have been most successful in cultivating the vine. Then comes Spring, all lightness, freshness, and brightness; here are boys carrying garlands; there are gardeners, male and female; shepherds and shepherdesses and rural musicians—all sweeping by in the mazes of the dance, singing and shouting as they go. After them comes the goddess herself—a beautiful young maiden in a triumphal car, decked with ribbons and flowers; and, when she has passed by, come a group of Alpine herdsmen, driving before them some of their fine-looking cattle, the loud tinkle of whose bells mingles oddly with the strains of the music. Spring is succeeded by the summer goddess Ceres, whose procession consists of a wagon drawn by oxen and decorated with corn, children carrying a beehive as a symbol of industry, reapers, gleaners, and threshers—all in honour of the joys of summer. This procession, like the former one, winds up with a lively throng of singers and dancers.

Summer ripens into autumn. Evoe, behold! Bacchus approaches with fauns, satyrs, and thyrsus-bearers. The victorious god is drawn by fiery horses covered with panther-skins, amid the clashing of cymbals, the beating of kettledrums, and the blowing of pipes and flutes. Corybantes, fauns, and Bacchantes—a wild noisy crew—swarm round the chariot of the god, performing their Bacchanalian dances. The



RAVINE OF THE CHAUDRON, MONTREUX.



CHURCH OF ST. FRANÇOIS, LAUSANNE.

priests lead the singing, and are answered by the choruses, and thanks are offered up to the god who has blessed the shores of the lake with his bounty. So exuberant and tumultuous is the mirth of autumn that it infects even the spectators. Silenus, riding backwards on his ass, and trolling forth in loud tones a song in praise of the Pays de Vaud, is greeted with rapturous applause, and, what with the clapping of hands, the gay dresses, the blue sky, bright sun, flowers, trees, intoxicating music, and happy faces, the general excitement is wrought up to the highest pitch.

Ouchy, the flourishing port of Lausanne, the town of the three hills, the capital of the canton, next attracts our notice. How many famous names are associated with Lausanne! It is like a dream to think of the time when Voltaire, Tissot, Rousseau, Gibbon, Constant, Fox, Mercier, Eynod, Haller, and Bonstetten used to meet and join the brilliant circle of witty and intellectual women then assembled here. This was in the days when the scoffing philosophy was in vogue; yet, with all its impertinence and scepticism, its devotees were very cheerful people, by no means averse from pleasure, and though they drank deep draughts from the cup of liberty, they never lost their charming grace, even when most intoxicated.

The inhabitants of Lausanne at the present day are said to be somewhat like them in character; that is, they love life, sunshine, and gaiety, and are original, natural, and rather indolent. One feels disposed, however, to question the justice of this last imputation when one looks at the massive arches of the great granite bridge which connects St. Fran-

çois with St. Laurent. It is solid enough to be the work of the Romans, and yet these few indolent people accomplished its construction without any assistance. In some respects Lausanne resembles Freiburg, for the ground upon which it stands is very much broken. Some parts of the town and some streets have now been connected; but in the heart of the town things have been left much as they were originally. The streets and alleys run up-hill and down-hill, and some one is wicked enough to declare that it is impossible to walk about the place without a drag on one's feet. But modern Lausanne does not live here; she has built her numerous handsome villas by the side of level roads, on wooded slopes and eminences, and will continue to spread as far as she can without losing sight of the cathedral-tower. The cathedral, which has the reputation of being the finest in all Switzerland, will always be the centre-point and crowning glory of Lausanne, both for the sake of its venerable antiquity, its history, and its intrinsic beauty.

But, though the town abounds with objects of interest, natural and historical, we must deny ourselves the pleasure of penetrating farther into the treasure-chamber, for fear we should not get away again. Just a passing glance must be bestowed, however, upon St. François, the southern part of the town. The venerable old church of St. François, the last object which meets our eye, used to be eagerly watched for as the goal of his journey by the traveller arriving by diligence in former times, before there was any railway station at Lausanne, or any landing-place for steamboats at Ouchy.

CHAPTER XV. FROM THE LAKE OF GENEVA TO THE 'MER DE GLACE.'

COMPARING the situation of Geneva with that of the towns of the Pays de Vaud, on the north-west shore of the lake, it must be admitted that the latter have the advantage; but still, the angle formed by the Alps and the Jura to the south of the lake confessedly affords one of the finest sites in the world. The scenery of Geneva is extremely soft and lovely in character, and has a soothing cheering effect upon the spirits. The combination of shrubs and trees, meadows and gardens, woods and orchards, is very pleasing, diversified and enlivened as it is by the presence of numerous châteaux and villas; and the beauty of the scene is, of course, greatly enhanced by the lake and its reflections, as well as by the Alps, which form the framework of the picture, and seem to make it quite complete in itself.

The town is divided by the Rhone into two parts: the district called Saint-Gervais and the town proper, which contains all the public buildings, collections, palaces, and other noteworthy objects. Saint-Gervais was for a long time nothing but a suburb; but it is building its new houses in a grand and luxurious style.

The river flows out of the lake at this point, having undergone such a complete purification on its way hither from Villeneuve, that its wholesome vigorous waters have become perfectly blue and transparent. It encircles two little islands, one of which contains some lofty black-looking houses, and was, in all probability, the place where the castle stood in the old Roman times; the other, the island of Rousseau, being shaded by some fine old poplars of unusual size, and connected with the Pont des Bergues, is

altogether of a more cheerful aspect. It is as he walks along the handsome quays, over the wide bridges, and through the pleasure-grounds which line the shores, that the stranger feels the full charm of the situation. First, there is the lake in all its mysterious beauty; and among the numerous summer residences which enliven its banks we see the hospitable château of Coppet, once the residence of Madame de Staël; and Nyon, anciently known to Julius Cæsar as *Julia Equestris*. To the right is Cologny, with its villages, surrounded by a circle of villas and bright-green vineyards, which contrast well with the dark handsome foliage of the beautiful chestnut woods. There, too, lie the Villa Diodati, in which Byron composed some of his poems; and, somewhat nearer the town, the luxurious Villa Favre, where lived Merle d'Aubigné, the famous historian of the Reformation.

From the Pont du Mont Blanc, as well as from the island of Rousseau, one looks far away into the sublime distance, where, high above the gray rocks of the Little Salève, Mont Blanc rears his silvery head, surrounded by a stately train of other glacier-mountains, whose domes and peaks rise on either side of him. The Môle pyramid, to the left of the Little Salève, guards the entrance into Faucigny, and farther off the mountains of Voirons, with their green pastures, subside into woods and meadows which slope down towards the lake. On summer evenings, when the sun has disappeared behind the dark mountains of Jura, the colouring of the whole scene is something wonderful. The foreground and middle-distance are veiled in mist and shadow, while the chain of the



Alps, and it alone, is still illuminated with the rosy splendour of daylight. The heights of Mont Blanc are all aflame with gold and red, and a thousand other varying tints, which gradually fade away into deep purple. It is just at this hour that the numerous gas-lamps are lighted on the quays and bridges and in the streets, and the glare from them illuminates the dark lake to a great distance. The wind blows softly across the gently sobbing waters, and whispers among the trees; and then the moon rises over the Alps, and the whole scene is changed, and we are at once transported into the realms of fairyland. Long streaks of bluish light glide over the surface of the water, and stud the tops of the waves with diamonds, making the dark lake look like the starry heavens. The nearest hills are all brilliantly lighted up, and gay sounds of music come to us from the Rousseau island. A row on the lake at this hour will recall to our minds all the old tales of water nymphs and fairies; and as we watch yonder boat gliding along, with its shining ghostly sail, we are tempted to ask whether the old magic vessel of long ago has not returned to these shores. It is said that the Lake of Zürich should be seen by daylight and the Lake of Geneva by moonlight, and the Genevese themselves declare that no one knows what their lake really is until he has seen it at midnight, when the moon is at the full. Certain it is that evening is the time when the real life of Geneva begins; for the whole of the day is devoted to the serious business of buying and selling, and the manufacture of watches and jewelry. In the evening the shores of the lake are crowded with foreigners from all parts of Europe; and, under these

circumstances, modern Geneva is often pronounced to be one of the finest towns in the world.

We are just going up to the summit of the Salève, to have a general view of the town and canton, and then we must hurry on to Chamounix and the 'Mer de Glace.' Mont Salève, indeed, ought hardly to be mentioned in the same breath with the giants of the vale of Chamounix; but still it has its own peculiar attractions, and affords us a good opportunity—the best we shall have—of waving our last farewells to Geneva. Seen from the town, the Salève looks like a bare precipitous wall of limestone, and its aspect does not improve much on a closer acquaintance. The eastern side, however, along which the road winds, is a gentle slope occupied by pleasant villages and orchards, handsome villas, and gardens surrounded by flourishing groves of beech and chestnut. Higher up, the mountain is clothed with a low growth of small beech-trees, hollies, aspens, junipers, and sweet chestnuts, which gradually diminish in number till they disappear altogether, and are succeeded by mosses and lichens. The mountain is much fissured, and is full of caves and grottoes. In the ravine which divides the Greater Salève from the Lesser lies the quiet charming little village of La Croisette.

We have now left the lively shores of the lake, with its vineyards and bowers of roses, far behind us, and have mounted up through the quiet green valley to a new world of ice, where we are surrounded by numbness and silence, and where man again becomes a wrestler with the ancient powers of Nature.

'Voilà la Mer de Glace!' cries the guide when we have ascended



LE CHAPEAU.

the Flegère or Montanvert, as if he were calling our attention to some quite ordinary spectacle. Three rivers of ice combine to form the enormous Glacier du Bois, to the middle part of which the French give the high-sound-

ing name of 'sea.' From the Aiguille de Lechaud descends the glacier of the same name and the Glacier Talêfre, and from the Col du Géant comes the Glacier du Tacul. The name of 'Mer de Glace' is by no means inappro-

prate, for, seen from above, it looks just like a sea frozen while its mighty waves were in full career; seen, however, from the nearer point of view called the Chapeau, a cliff opposite Montan-

vert, the icy waves take the form of pyramids and obelisks of such gigantic size as to make human beings and their ships look like children's toys in comparison.

CHAPTER XVI. VALAIS—THE VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

If the traveller wish to see the wildest and most gigantic mountains in Switzerland, and at the same time the largest of its valleys—if he wish to enjoy the soft air and luxurious vegetation of Italy at the same time that he beholds the most extensive glaciers and the most wonderful mountain passes and roads, scenes of primitive civilisation and desert-places far removed from all humanising influences and never trodden by a human foot—let him wander through the canton of Valais, for he will there see all the varied forms of Nature developed to the utmost, and will meet with contrasts sharper than occur in almost any other region.

Yes, Valais is truly a wonderland; but it has only lately been admitted to a place in the programme of the Alpine tourist. Monte Rosa and the dome of the Mischabel, mountains which rear their heads to some fifteen thousand feet or more above the level of the sea, and cast even the Finsteraarhorn and Jungfrau into the shade; the Lyskamm, Matterhorn or Mont Cervin, Weisshorn, Dent Blanche, Grand Combin, Les Jumeaux, or Castor and Pollux, all of which attain a height of more than thirteen thousand feet; and the Dent d'Hérens, Alphubel, Breithorn, and Grand Cornier, which are more than twelve thousand feet high—these, whose names are so familiar to us, are all to be found

in Valais. Among these mountains lie the largest glaciers of the Alps, namely, the Gorner and Aletsch glaciers, with which more than a hundred others are associated. The principal elements, indeed, which go to make up the canton of Valais are rock, snow, and glaciers; and, as these occupy nearly nine-tenths of its area, there is but little space left for the population or for the cultivation of corn and wine; and as, in addition to this, one is constantly meeting with traces of the havoc wrought by the elements, one is apt to go away with the impression that the whole canton is more or less like a desert.

Valais is, indeed, very thinly populated, and such inhabitants as it has have naturally congregated along its main artery, the Rhone, near which runs the only good road it has been possible to construct. This river has shown itself a very faithless friend throughout its whole career for centuries past; it has committed the wildest ravages, flooding the fields and villages of Upper Valais, and destroying human habitations and human lives by the thousand. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, especially if one knows something of the history or town chronicles of Valais, that the whole canton should look uncared for and dreary, or that its people, in spite of their gentleness and good temper—in spite, too, of their ardent love of liberty and



their ancient heroism—should almost universally bear the stamp of neglect on their faces; at least, there is an essential difference between them and the Bernese, Italians, and Vaudois, their nearest neighbours in the north, south, and west respectively. They lead very isolated lives, and are quite cut off from the outer world; for, though their land is intersected by numerous famous roads, these serve only as means of communication between the lands to the north and south, and, by facilitating the passage of troops, have frequently done Valais more harm than good. Certainly they have not been the means of introducing any improvements into the country. Yet these great carriage-roads which climb the steep sides of the Alps are very magnificent works, and those who have travelled along the cloud-enveloped Simplon will hardly be inclined to believe that it is the lowest of the Valais Alpine passes. There is a grand sound, too, about the name of the Great St. Bernard; but the most remarkable and the most daring of all the passes is that of Mont Cervin, or the Matterjoch, one of the most ancient and most elevated mountain-passes in Switzerland.

As soon as we reach the valley of Martigny, we begin to hear the alluring voice of the siren of Italy; for people are all asking one another, 'Do you know the mountain?'—meaning thereby the Great St. Bernard, with the sign-post pointing down towards Aosta. But then, too, Martigny is overlooked by the Tête Noire and the Col de Balme, both of which seem to beckon us towards the valley of Chamounix, to prepare for excursions among the mountains; and then, again, from Martigny we may go up the valley of the Rhone till we come to Brieg, whence the

beautiful road over the Simplon will take us down into Italy.

Martignach—or, if the reader prefers the sound of the French name, Martigny—is historically famous; but this has not been of much advantage to it, and, in fact, the fate of the town has been like that of many a noble old family, whose remote descendants have had but a miserable sort of existence. It stands on the site of the ancient Octodurum, or Roman colony of Vicus Veragrorum—the same which claims as her founder Sergius Galba, who built a castle to the west of the Dranse, and was sent by Cæsar to subdue all the native races in this part. Many scenes of bloodshed and violence ensued, nor did the general state of things improve much until the beginning of the seventh century, when King Theodoric II. founded a convent here, and placed it under the protection of St. Martin. In spite of this, however, Martigny is said to derive its name, not from the saint, but from Marteau, a blacksmith who must have held a position of great importance, and have been looked upon as exactly the right man in the right place in a neighbourhood where both men and animals need be wellshod, if they are to attempt the long and trying roads which branch out hence in various directions.

What a number of knights and travellers, kings, bishops, and grandees have passed through the upper and lower town in bygone days on their way to or from the Pass of the Great St. Bernard! This famous pass has been so intimately associated with the history of Europe, that any one who feels inclined to write a monograph on the subject will find materials enough to fill several volumes. The Great St. Bernard rears its head aloft among

the clouds like some ancient monument—not, indeed, that it is distinguished for its beauty any more than are the Pyramids; but it possesses considerable interest because upon its walls one may read the fate of many nations, and upon the stones by the wayside one may still trace their foot-prints.

The building of the house of refuge is ascribed to St. Bernard of Menthon, Archbishop of Aosta, who hoped to put a stop both to the plundering and to the horrible and superstitious rites which were still practised there, by establishing this house and placing in it a brotherhood of regular canons, who should conduct the service of the Christian Church strictly according to the prescribed rule. When Pope Leo IX. crossed the mountain he found the new institution in the best possible order, and the mountain, which up to that time had been called after St. Nicholas of Myra, henceforth bore the name of St. Bernard, the benefactor of mankind.

People who disport themselves during the months of June and July in the sunny watering-places down below, wearing their lightest summer clothing and complaining of the heat of the valley, or perhaps taking refuge in their comfortable hotel at the first breath of the evening breeze, have no idea of the wild winter storms which are raging among the mountains at this same time, nor of the clouds of sharp needle-like snowflakes which flutter round the savage cliffs, blowing in the face of the half-frozen traveller and completely hiding his path. In those upper regions terrible dangers are everywhere

lurking; and those who escape death at the hands of the avalanche and treacherous snow-storm too often perish from hunger and fatigue.

However, the monks and their servants keep constant watch over the lives of the wayfarers, and are greatly assisted in this their arduous labour of love by the faithful St. Bernard dogs. The little band of watchers take no rest night or day; even when the sun is shining two servants are constantly pacing to and fro on the look-out for travellers, and in bad weather the whole establishment turns out to search for those who have lost their way, and to administer restoratives to such as have become exhausted and unconscious from exposure to the cold. The grave-looking beautiful building of dark freestone which stands in the midst of this dreary desert is deservedly looked upon with admiration, as are also all its inhabitants, both men and animals, who have renounced the sunshine and other attractions of the valley below; and it is with a feeling of reverence that one enters within walls so sacred, which have already extended their generous hospitality to so many hundred thousand human beings. Unfortunately the genuine old breed of St. Bernard dogs had almost if not altogether died out at one time, owing to the unusually severe weather which occurred in the winter of 1830, when both packs, male and female, were taken out, and great numbers of the dogs perished. Lately, however, the original breed has been revived at Hollingen, near Bern, and has been re-introduced in this and other hospices.

(To be continued.)

BLUE EYES AND GOLDEN HAIR.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

BY ANNIE THOMAS (MRS. PENDER CUDLIP).

CHAPTER IV.

THERE is a great deal of diplomatic talent displayed the next day both by Miss Bertram and her niece. The former has made up her mind that Daisy shall be out of the way when this very superfluous young squire of Glenholme calls. And Daisy has made up her mind that nothing short of physical force shall get her out of the house while there is a possibility of his coming to it. She takes her morning ride contentedly enough, for she knows that there is no chance of her missing him at that hour. Indeed, she half hopes to find the stalwart young Apollo leaning over the rails again. She cannot help experiencing a pang of disappointment when, after riding up and down twice, she fails to find him among the crowd. 'He ought to have taken it for granted that I should be here again to-day,' she says poutingly to herself, and then she blushes a conscious burning blush as it flashes across her that, perhaps, he is not sufficiently interested in her to take the trouble to haunt any particular spot for the sake of seeing her. 'I am a goose,' Daisy says to herself: 'because he seemed glad to see me yesterday, I fancied he might care to try and see me again this morning; when I ought to have known that he would have been just as glad to see papa, or Tartar, or any one from Burns-

leigh.' Then she resolves not to think a bit more about Harry Poynter, and carries out her resolve by thinking of him vigorously for the remainder of her ride.

It is after luncheon that the aunt and niece develop their respective diplomatic powers. Miss Bertram, who, in the ordinary course of things, never thinks of driving out before four o'clock in July, announces to-day that she will go out at three, and that Daisy must accompany her, to choose some lace which she designs shall decorate Daisy on a very special occasion.

'Aunt Bertram, if we go at three we shall fall victims to *coup de soleil*, and I shall be unable to go to Lady Beauton's to-night,' Daisy says speciously; and Miss Bertram's resolution begins to waver. Then she remembers that 'this Mr. Poynter' is imminent, and says,

'My dear Daisy, the sun is no fiercer at three than at four; and there's no saying how soon this lace may be wanted. Did Sir Bolingbroke make a special point of your being at Lady Beauton's to-night?'

'He seemed to wish me to be there,' Daisy says.

She feels slightly remorseful about the way in which she is using Sir Bolingbroke as an instrument to work out her design of staying in to see Harry Poynter. Still, remorseful as she feels, she uses him.

'Then we will go,' Miss Bertram says decidedly; 'but a little quiet drive won't hurt you. We'll settle about the lace, and go down to Covent Garden to order in any new plants we may see, and then we will go to the Park. I will let you off going to Mrs. Granville's "afternoon," and won't ask you to make a single call to-day if you're ready to go with me at three.'

'Aunt Bertram—' Daisy pauses for a moment or two. She is about to plead that she 'must stay at home to write to mamma,' but the honesty of her nature prevents her making any more false excuses. 'Aunt Bertram, I want to stay at home this afternoon to see Harry Poynter,' she says suddenly. 'Don't think me bold and forward, and everything of the kind, for saying so; but I feel that it would make me very unhappy to go out when I know that he is coming. We were boy and girl together, you know, and he gave me Tartar; and till you know Tartar you can't understand what a strong claim the gift of the dog gives Harry on my gratitude; and we shall both of us be living down at Burnsleigh again, by and by; and *don't* you see that it's impossible that I should behave discourteously to him?'

Daisy sinks on a low stool by her aunt's side as she says this, and wheedles the old lady to the utmost of her wheedling power. But Miss Bertram remembers all that Daisy may lose through an inopportune display of interest in Mr. Poynter. She has found out from Mrs. Granville that the Glenholme property is only worth two thousand a year. Daisy must not be permitted to fling herself away on such a pittance, when Sir Bolingbroke's twenty thousand per annum may be at her disposal if only she is wise. 'I should not

be doing my duty to her or to her family,' Miss Bertram says to herself, 'if I encouraged her in hankering after this young man; he will do for one of her less pretty sisters, but my girl must make the success of the season.'

Fraught with this feeling she opens her affectionate battery upon her young charge.

'Mr. Poynter will hardly expect you to run to meet him in such an extremely marked manner, Daisy. He would probably feel nothing but surprise if he came here and found you had upset our daily routine for the sake of receiving him. My dear child, the thing can't be done; if he were your accepted lover even, I wouldn't permit you to renounce society for the sake of staying at home to sentimentalise like a village schoolgirl; and I have got to learn that he stands on that footing with you.'

Daisy crimsons, ceases from wheedling, and starts up in a moment.

'I have told you exactly what he is, and how I regard him. I wish you hadn't said that about his being my accepted lover, aunt Bertram. You've put a thought in my head that has never been there before about Harry Poynter, and it may make me awkward when I meet him. However, I'll do as you please now; after what you have said, I'd rather not see him to-day.'

The girl is hurt, unmistakably hurt; and Miss Bertram feels a little sorry for the pain she has 'unavoidably' inflicted. But she stands acquitted in her own mind of having employed any other than the most justifiable means to compass her praiseworthy end. She loves Daisy dearly: a little because Daisy is of her own flesh and blood; a little because Daisy is so lovely that she has brought re-

flected lustre to Miss Bertram ; and a great deal because, by the grace of Sir Bolingbroke Bray, Daisy may be a leader of society next year. Still, loving Daisy dearly as she does, she does not repent having wounded the poor child, since the pain inflicted has caused Daisy to take the course her aunt deems desirable.

'It's just as well that girls should see their conduct with other people's eyes at times,' she says suavely. 'Of course I know that you would have had no ulterior object in staying at home to receive this young man ; but he might have thought you had. Young men are so apt to be deluded by their vanity.'

So Daisy lets herself be carried off to look at the pattern of a set of lace flounces which her aunt Bertram is well disposed to order for her ; and Daisy is not in the mood to see the beauty of the most beautiful lace to-day.

'You had better save your money, aunt Bertram,' she says, when she hears the price, which appears appalling to her. 'What good will that lace be to me at Burnleigh ? I shall be afraid to wear it, because Mrs. Granville will turn and rend me for presuming to possess anything so much better than she has herself.'

'It's more than probable that, if you ever wear it at Burnleigh, you will be in such a position that Mrs. Granville will not care to cavil at anything you may please to wear,' aunt Bertram replies, with an air of mysterious sagacity that is extremely annoying to Daisy, since the latter dare not openly demand the reason of it. 'I mustn't do anything to make aunt Bertram work back to the subject of Sir Bolingbroke,' the girl thinks. 'If I do, there's no knowing what she may not taunt me into doing or promising to do ; she's quite cap-

able of even saying that I have given my heart to Harry Poynter before he has asked me for it.'

Somehow or other the thought of Harry Poynter carries her almost complacently through the weary work of shopping, which her aunt insists upon her performing this afternoon. In all matters connected with the adornment and further gracing of her niece's most graceful person, Miss Bertram has been liberal, not to say lavish, all through Daisy's brief campaign. But this day she outdoes all her former efforts at munificence, and still Daisy fails to feel as grateful as she fancies she ought to feel. Instinctively she understands that her aunt is not giving her rich gifts because she loves her—and generosity towards the object is the natural outcome of love—but because there is a probability of her making a brilliant marriage, and occupying a prominent place in society. Moreover, all that Miss Bertram does for Daisy, and all that she gives to Daisy, is done and given in the overpowering and semi-patronising way in which rich people invariably bestow boons upon their poor relations. The girl's heart and soul are in revolt when her aunt puts bracelets and necklets of gold and jewels of price about her. 'If she would only give me the money, and let me send it to poor mamma,' Daisy thinks, with tears in her eyes, 'then I could say "thank you" with my whole heart ; but as it is I don't thank her a bit in reality : she only does it in the hope that it may redound to her own honour and glory.'

The shopping is over at last ; and as it is nearly five o'clock, and Daisy looks so pale and tired that Miss Bertram is alarmed for her appearance this night at the Marchioness of Beauton's, she consents to waive the drive in the

Park for once. 'That young man from the wilds will have been and gone before now,' the aunt tells herself; and the niece simultaneously is thinking,

'Harry is sure to think that I'm so elated by this brief London experience of mine that my head is turned to the extent of making me forgetful of old friends. And if he thinks that he will despise me, and never come near me again.'

This consideration takes the bloom off her cheeks, robs her eyes of their starry light, and depresses her so thoroughly altogether that it is a very pallid and sad-looking Daisy who looks up, when the carriage stops at her aunt's door, to see Mr. Poynter standing on the doorstep.

In a moment all her views of life in general, and of her aunt's conduct in particular, undergo a change. She forgives Miss Bertram the drive, Sir Bolingbroke, the jewelry and laces, the patronage, and all her other enormities. How can she feel other than forgiving and beneficent now that he is here, showing his gladness and pleasure at the sight of her so openly and eagerly? Even Miss Bertram, disgusted as she is at having been outwitted by chance in this way, cannot make up her mind to do other than accord a civil welcome to the brilliant-looking, gracious-mannered, young fellow. She even goes so far as to acknowledge in the recesses of her own heart that Harry Poynter would have her casting-vote, if there were not such a mighty disproportion between his income and Sir Bolingbroke's. As it is, 'Daisy must not see any more of him after this,' she determines; 'no man I know can stand a chance while he is in the field.'

Happily for the young pair they are unconscious of this determina-

tion on Miss Bertram's part, and so an hour slips away very pleasantly over afternoon tea in Miss Bertram's drawing-room. The room is large, and is one of those earthly paradises, a room full of nooks and corners. Miss Bertram is not very æsthetic in many of her tastes, but she is the possessor of a large collection of old china and *bric-à-brac*. Harry Poynter blesses the cups and saucers, the old Florentine brass-work and Venetian mirrors, as they give him an excuse for loitering round the room, penetrating into the nooks, and disappearing round the corners with Daisy while she describes the various *objets d'art* to him. Miss Bertram sits and seethes at the sight, but she is compelled to seethe silently. She cannot show such a want of confidence in her niece as to order her to sit down; and she cannot, as a civilised hostess, curb that young man's apparently irrepressible desire for instruction. Nor can she get up and follow them about. 'It must never happen again, it shall never happen again,' she says, in nervous agitation, to herself, as the sound of their voices, now in whispered colloquy, now in merry laughter, reaches her from the other end of the room. Once she does make an attempt to rout the enemy by saying,

'I am sure you must be boring Mr. Poynter, Daisy. Young men never care for china.'

'I should care for anything that Daisy showed me,' he replies blithely enough, and the tone of intimate assurance makes Miss Bertram wince. She feels absolutely guilty of disloyalty to Sir Bolingbroke, to whose cause she has pledged herself, in permitting even this much intercourse between this exceedingly detrimental young man and the Daisy whom Sir Bolingbroke desires to

gather. 'I will give him a hint this evening to be prompt; it's no use his being a laggard in love if he wants to secure Daisy; and I'll take care that this sort of thing doesn't occur again.'

Meanwhile all her plans are being quietly defeated by the young pair, who are unconscious that she is making them.

'I'll be in the Row to-morrow at twelve, and you won't let that fellow who was with you yesterday cut into the conversation I want to have with you about Burnsleigh, will you?' he says appealingly to Daisy, and Daisy gives him her promise delightedly.

'I was so surprised to hear from St. Briac to-day that Willie is tutor to St. Briac's young brother, Gerald.'

'Yes; isn't it a good thing for Willie? So you know St. Briac? Will you be there to-night?'

'At Lady Beauton's? Yes. Will you?'

'I will; and it will be the happiest of all my balls,' the girl cries out frankly. 'Do you remember, when you were home the last time, how we used to waltz in the schoolroom every evening? I've often thought of it since I have been up here; and I've never had such a partner as you ever since.'

'We always went together well, didn't we?' he responds. It makes him very happy to find that even his waltzing, which was not specially good at the time to which Daisy refers, is glorified in Daisy's memory. It makes him even happier to feel that he will be able to give her many opportunities to-night of discovering the improvement which has taken place in his 'manner of going' since then. He proceeds to improve the shining hours by seeking to engage Daisy at once for the first two round dances. But

Daisy is conscientious. She is engaged to Lord St. Briac for the first, and to Sir Bolingbroke for the second; and as disagreeable as it will be to dance with the latter now, she will stand to her engagements.

His eyes grow anxious as she announces this; for brief as has been his sojourn in the gay, reckless, brilliant, money-loving world of London, he has learnt enough already to know that Sir Bolingbroke, despite his antecedents, is a dangerous rival. About St. Briac he has no alarm, for it is well known that he has promised his family that he will surrender to the charms of Miss Millard's money-bags. Moreover St. Briac did not express the faintest or most ordinary admiration for Daisy when he was speaking of her brother this morning. Whereas Harry had seen with his own eyes the light in which Sir Bolingbroke openly regarded her. So in blissful ignorance of where the real danger lies, Mr. Poynter makes up his mind to devote all his energies to keeping her apart from the baronet this night at the ball.

'I wish we were both back at Burnsleigh,' he whispers; and she looks up at him shyly, and he sees that his wish is reflected in her eyes and echoing in her heart. If he will only speak out now to his old playfellow and early love, all will be well with them. But he does not know this; and he fears his fate a little too much, and Miss Bertram calls him in a peremptory manner to her side, and the opportunity is over.

But his hand clasps hers very lingeringly when he bids her good-bye, and he associates himself with her in a way that is grievous to her aunt by saying,

'You'll help me to make out a programme of the rejoicings that

Lincoln insists must take place when I go home, won't you, Daisy? The days for roasting bullocks whole are over; we'll do something very quaint and curious in the way of village festivities if you will only help me.'

'Does the whole village belong to you, then?' Miss Bertram asks bluntly.

'Not at all; Granville is the monarch of nearly all that is to be surveyed down at Burnsleigh. Glenholme is a pretty little place though, isn't it, Daisy? and I hope I shall have the pleasure of welcoming you to it some day, Miss Bertram.'

There is something so joyous and thorough about him that Miss Bertram cannot snub him for his audacity, as she longs to do. She even suffers a severe smile to play over her virgin lips as she replies,

'Thank you; but I am not likely to visit Burnsleigh, the air of that part of the country never did agree with me. Scotland and the north of England suit me much better. I am looking forward to spending part of the autumn up in the Highlands with my dear niece.'

Now Sir Bolingbroke Bray's estates, as all men know, are up in Scotland. No wonder that, after Miss Bertram fires this parting shot at him, Mr. Poynter takes his departure with the fixed idea in his mind, namely, that Miss Bertram is a manœuvring, match-making, malignant old woman, from whose clutches it behoves him to rescue Daisy as soon as possible.

Everything is in full swing at Lady Beauton's ball this evening when Miss Bertram and Daisy gallantly and gaspingly force a passage through the crowd that throngs the staircase and ante-rooms. Miss Millard and her

mamma have been received with the most flattering *empressment* by the Marchioness of Beauton, who, before their arrival, had implored her son, with tears in eyes, to 'rid her of that appalling old woman without unnecessary delay immediately after her advent.'

'For your sake, dear boy,' the affectionate and devoted mother had said, 'I am prepared to go any lengths as far as the girl is concerned; but the mother! St. Briac, you must make her understand that she is not to come near me *once* after I have received her. I feel my health giving way every time she approaches me; and as I don't want to break down before your marriage, you must really keep her away from me.'

'Yes, if you can only weather out the storm till I have won my gentle bride, we'll smother the old lady comfortably under some of her own cotton-bales afterwards,' St. Briac laughs.

'And you will come to a conclusion with Miss Millard to-night, St. Briac?' his mother asks somewhat nervously; for the Millard alliance is one that will restore the rather emaciated fortunes of the house of Beauton.

Accordingly, though Miss Millard is only a few degrees less detestable than her mother in the eyes of the Marchioness, the understanding of the Marchioness teaches her that Miss Millard is a highly-desirable wife for her son. There is a touch of asperity, as well as of anxiety, in the tone in which she asks the young man, who has been playing the big fish for some months now, if he intends to land it to-night.

'Well, yes; it's "in the bond" that I do so, I suppose,' he says, with a sigh.

And as he pledges him anew to pursue the course which is to

recoup the fortunes of his house, he thinks of a girl who had not shone out like a star in society when he first gave in his adhesion to society—a girl whose fair beauty and rare grace and sweet stately charm would grace a coronet, or a crown for that matter—and his heart and his taste revolt against the bride he is sworn to win as he remembers Daisy.

The deed has to be done this night, and St. Briac sets about the preliminaries, which have to be gone through, with the best grace he has at command. He is a fine specimen of a young patrician, and he looks a very knight of courtesy as he advances to Miss Millard and claims that young lady's hand for the dance, and attention to his deserts. And as she yields him both he thinks of Daisy again—thinks of her with a thrilling mixture of intense admiration and yearning regret.

Miss Millard is not the sort of girl to be married for her money only; for she is a bonnie-looking creature of the fair, fresh, rather fat order. Her face is a very comely one, full of good-temper (when nothing occurs to put her out), and expressive of a fair amount of intelligence, and resolution to have a full recognition accorded to her merits. She has ruled a little queen in every coterie into which she has hitherto gone, both in Cottonopolis and London. But this season she has been taught that there are realms in which she may not hope to reign. She has been sought by great ladies of the Marchioness of Beanton's clique; but they have, one and all, taught her that in their society she can have no sovereignty, no place, nor power, indeed, of any kind, unless she and her gold come among them indorsed by the approval, which

marriage is supposed to express, of such a one as Lord St. Briac.

She has accepted their dicta readily enough; indeed, she is a consenting party to the scheme which has been propounded for St. Briac's benefit. She likes St. Briac very well for himself—that is to say, she has seen no one whom she likes better than St. Briac. But she *loves* the prospect of being a marchioness; and she is quite contented to see her mother ignored and put into the shade by these *grandes dames*, while she herself is graduating for the place she is eventually to hold among them.

But she is not quite contented to be put into the shade herself by a 'mere penniless nobody' like Daisy Eldon. If a duke's unmarried daughter cuts the ground from under her feet, Julia Millard bears the shock heroically; but that an obscure country girl, without a farthing to bless herself with, should execute the same feat unintentionally is a very bitter drop in the cup which fashionable life is holding to Miss Millard's lips just at present. St. Briac has been in pretty constant attendance on her lately; but she has seen him in the Row glance too admiringly, for the glance to be tolerated by her, after that matchless trotter, the Knave of Hearts. If there is one thing on which Miss Millard prides herself, it is on her horsemanship. She really does know what she is about on horseback; and in spite of her figure erring a little in some of its lines, in consequence of that tendency towards fat which the most rigorous regimen cannot quite subdue, she looks very well in the saddle. But Daisy looks better; and quietly as she insists upon the Knave conducting himself, Daisy attracts more attention than falls to Miss Millard's share.

And so there is something of bitterness in the *bonhomie* with which Miss Millard says,

'Do you know who that marvellously handsome man is who chained Daisy Eldon to the rails in the Row the day before yesterday? She made quite an exhibition of her eagerness to talk to him.'

CHAPTER V.

'DAISY ELDON is incapable of making "an exhibition of herself" in any but a charming way,' Lord St. Briac replies, and something in his tone makes Miss Millard glance sharply at him.

Rumour has told her already that, if Daisy had been endowed with one half the wealth which is to be her (Julia Millard's) portion, Lord St. Briac would not have dallied in his wooing. So she glances sharply at him now as she detects the tremor in the tone in which he speaks Daisy's name.

She looks at him at an unlucky moment. Daisy has just come into the room with her aunt, and St. Briac's eyes are fixed upon her with a look of such ardent irrepressible admiration and regard that Julia the heiress tingles with jealousy. Daisy, in a dress of creamy-white silk, with pearls on her neck and arms, and a sash of flowers, is looking lovelier than ever this night. The unmistakable love-light is in her eyes as she looks shyly round the assembled throng in search of the one without whose presence now the most brilliant scene would seem dull and tame to her. The love-light is in her eyes; and Miss Millard, who is neither stupid nor devoid of experience, recognises its sympathetic fire, and mistakenly supposes that it is burning for

St. Briac. There is not a particle of love in the fair Julia's breast for her lordly suitor, nevertheless she thrills with rage as she sees his eyes riveted on Daisy's bonnie beauty. A dozen men are crowding round the latter, eagerly seeking to inscribe the name of the beauty of the season on their cards. But presently she is whirled off by one who is a stranger to the majority of those present; and St. Briac, recalling himself to a sense of his duty towards Miss Millard, turns to her and pursues his own train of thought aloud, without regarding the fact that she may not have watched Daisy's proceedings with a tender interest equal to his own.

'I wonder how Poynter has got to know her already,' he says meditatively. 'Did you see? He took her off in a sort of old-familiar-friend style that looks like having known her a long time; and that can't be the case, for he's only just back from six or seven years in Australia.'

'He was the handsome man I was telling you about, the one Miss Eldon was making an exhibition of herself about in the Row the other morning. You didn't seem to like the phrase; but I couldn't think of any other that would fittingly describe the situation.'

'Shall we take a turn?' he interrupts. He has no desire to hear anything about Daisy from Miss Millard just now, and especially has he no desire to hear more about Daisy's intercourse with 'that good-looking young fellow, Poynter,' whose handsome face, as St. Briac is liberally willing to admit, is sufficient to win him the favour of any woman.

'The room is getting too crowded to dance comfortably,' Miss Millard says; and she indicates that she would like to be led into

the cool and low-lighted shades of a conservatory which they are passing at the moment.

It is well understood by them all that the offer is to be made to-night, and Miss Millard thinks the sooner the better now, as, when once she has plighted her maiden troth to him, she will have the right to reprimand him as sharply as she desires for his ill-concealed tender feeling for Daisy Eldon.

'It is no use kicking against the pricks,' he tells himself, as he leads her along between alleys of the choicest exotics to a seat at the further end of the conservatory. His fate is before him, and he must fulfil it. Not such a bad fate after all, as times go. Miss Millard will bring him a hundred thousand a year, and is in herself the sort of girl to deserve a very warm regard from the man she marries. She is affectionate, quite clever enough and good-looking enough for every-day life; and it is not her fault that she appears to be made of very common clay, indeed, by the side of that piece of delicate porcelain, Daisy Eldon. 'Besides,' the young heir to the Marquisate of Beauton tells himself, 'it would perhaps be a bore to marry a girl one was very much in love with.' He feels sure that when Julia is Lady St. Briac she may follow the fashion of the day and flirt as only young matrons seem free to do, without causing him one jealous qualm. Whereas, if he could only afford to marry Daisy he would surely grudge every look and word she gave to any other man. Even as he thinks this he sees Daisy and Harry Poynter saunter into the conservatory by a side-door, and sit down in a nook where they are half hidden by the gracious screen of foliage and flowers, and though she is not his

wife he feels the jealous qualm with sickening intensity.

'How silent you are!' Miss Millard says pettishly. She did not bring him in here to see him watching Daisy Eldon in dumb anguish. 'He may moon and spoon about her and after her as much as he likes after we are married,' the practical girl tells herself; 'but I won't stand any sentimental nonsense about her now. I'll give him to understand before we move from here that he must choose between us without any further delay.'

He cannot tear his eyes and attention from Daisy, whom he sees listening with joyful eyes to something Harry Poynter is saying to her; but he answers the charge of silence which Julia has brought against him courteously enough.

'Don't you know there are some moments when the thoughts of the heart "fill the silence like a speech"?'

'That is only the case, I should think, when one is very much in love or very much in debt,' she answers; and St. Briac is afraid that his indifference to this girl may merge into positive dislike before he has taken the decided step which all his family expect him to take. She is more than a little out of temper now, and, as is invariably the case with an underbred woman, she relinquishes all efforts at being either courteous or kind when she is annoyed. Her tone is sharpened, her eyes sparkle vindictively, and there is altogether an air of defiance, not to say swagger, about her which revolts him as she says,

'Perhaps, if you want to ponder on either of the themes I've mentioned, you'll be good enough to take me back into the ballroom first; I may amuse myself better there than I am doing here.'

For a moment he is tempted to take her at her word, lead her back to her mother, and go to his mother with the statement that he found it impossible to swallow the pill, gloriously as it is gilded. Then he reminds himself of his debts, and of the futility of his hankering after Daisy, and so, though he will not throw the handkerchief just yet, he waves it before Miss Millard's eyes.

'Before this night is over you will know what the feeling was that chained my tongue, and I think you will forgive me.'

He murmurs this just as though he were really in love with her; and as she is quite as well contented with the semblance as the reality, she relents, relapses into smiles, and prepares herself to say 'Yes' at once. But he feels that he cannot bind himself till he has had one dance with, and said a few words to, Daisy Eldon. So he rises and offers his arm to Miss Millard with the words,

'We'll come back here again by and by, won't we? and then you shall hear the secret of my silence;' and leads her up the side to where Daisy and Harry Poynter are still sitting.

'Miss Eldon, you defrauded me of my waltz; may I have the honour of another? This next—may it be mine?'

'I am engaged for it to Harry Poynter,' she says hesitatingly.

'Poynter, be a good fellow; let me have one turn with Miss Eldon,' St. Briac pleads, so eagerly that both Harry and Daisy find themselves agreeing to his request. The four stroll back to the ball-room together. Their progress in company is a very brief one; but brief as it is, and satisfied as Miss Millard now feels that St. Briac will formally surrender to her to-night, she cannot resist firing one shot at her rival.

'Are you going to Hurlingham to-morrow, Miss Eldon?'

'I believe not. Aunt Bertram doesn't enjoy polo; and I am not interested on either side to-morrow,' Daisy answers.

'Not interested on either side! O you incorrigible little flirt! How can you say you're not interested when we all know that Sir Bolingbroke Bray will be playing on his famous pony "Daisy"?''

'I wish men wouldn't give their horses and dogs girls' names!' Daisy says, in genuine distress. She has been spending the last three-quarters of an hour in coming to what girls call an 'understanding' with Harry Poynter; that is to say, they have toyed with the subject of their 'interest in each other,' and have trenched on very tender ground indeed several times in the course of their conversation. They have agreed to 'be great friends,' and never to let any interlopers come between them; and Harry has told her something that sounds very sweetly in her ears, though of course in reality it is no concern at all of hers. He has told her that, in common with every other boy and young man, he has found a dozen faces fair, and loved them 'for a week, a month, or a day,' as the case might be. 'But,' he has added, 'do you know, Daisy, I never cared about one of them enough to want to kiss her; because kissing a girl with me means wanting her and asking her to be my wife. Are you glad?'

And to this question Daisy has given him no answer—in words—yet. But they are both so happy that he has asked it.

It is while they are steeped in the silence which is golden after this speech of Harry's that St. Briac and Miss Millard break into their solitude. And so it comes

to pass that poor Daisy feels she may be lowered in Harry Poynter's estimation when Miss Millard calls her an 'incurrible little flirt,' and speaks of Sir Bolingbroke Bray and his 'famous polo-pony Daisy,' as if she, Daisy Eldon, had a vested interest in both.

Her partner, St. Briac, takes her 'the one turn' for which he has pleaded so eloquently, but he seems by no means disposed to relinquish her at the termination of it. On the contrary, he persuades her to cross the corridor with him to look at a picture that he vows resembles Daisy in his mother's boudoir; and when they reach it he breathes more freely than he has breathed before this night, for he knows that Miss Millard dare not invade its sacred seclusion.

St. Briac knows well that this girl, for whom his heart is sick, is not for him, and that Miss Millard is. Nevertheless he cannot resist trying to awaken Daisy's interest, and feeling for a few minutes how sweet life would be for him if only Daisy had the filthy lucre that is needed at this juncture to regild the Beuton coronet. He is, as has been said, a very fine specimen of a young English patrician; and as our English patricians are the finest results of breeding, training, blood, and culture to be found on this hemisphere, he may be accepted without further explanation as a man to whom any girl's heart would naturally seriously incline. It is currently said of him that his brains are far too good for that place in the Upper House which he must eventually fill, and already he is known widely, and not ridiculously, as a vigilant detector of anything good in art, though the state of the family exchequer has sometimes cramped his efforts at collecting.

Altogether Daisy may be forgiven (in spite of all that has passed between Harry and herself) for thinking Miss Millard 'a very lucky girl,' after ten minutes of unrestrained intercourse with Lord St. Briac.

He is quite resolved upon one thing, and that is that the girl who has struck the only genuine chord of love that has ever been struck in his heart shall 'know what he thinks about her' before they part this night. He tells himself in a spasm of chivalric feeling that he will not attempt to win any responsive words from her; but 'By Jove, she shall know that I love her,' he says, 'and that I would ask her to be my wife if it were not for want of the bawbees.'

He begins giving the information to Daisy in the most guarded and proper way imaginable. He tells her how he has always watched her approvingly on the Knave of Hearts.

'That's a pace that not one girl in a thousand could take easily as you do,' he remarks; and Daisy answers with apparent carelessness, but in reality because she has been nettled by Miss Millard,

'The dear little Knave! I'm glad to hear a good word said of him by you. Miss Millard always derides him for being more showy than fast.'

'If Miss Millard could only sit him as you do, and get him to sit, she'd frame him in gold as an advertisement of her proficiency in the noble art of equitation,' St. Briac laughs.

'I wish she would frame some of her speeches in gold, because gold is a true metal and wouldn't frame a false impression,' Daisy replies. 'She knew I should be annoyed at the way she jumbled up polo and Sir Bolingbroke Bray and his pony Daisy and myself

just now, and yet she did it. Why should she have gone out of her way to annoy me?

'Because she knows that I would go a good deal out of my way to try and please you,' St. Briac says bluntly; and Daisy lures him on undesignedly by asking,

'And why shouldn't you go out of your way to please me?'

'Because I am bound hand and foot in vile fetters of need,' he exclaims. 'Don't you understand? Mayn't I try to make you understand it all? She sees what every one is welcome to see as far as I am concerned—and that is that I love you, Daisy.'

He casts aside all consideration for Miss Millard, all recollection of the way in which he has half pledged himself to her and wholly pledged himself to his family to snare her to-night. He only sees Daisy, he only cares for Daisy, he only remembers that if he loses Daisy he will lose 'the light that ne'er will shine again on life's dull stream.'

She wavers like a reed shaken by the wind for a few moments. St. Briac is such a nice fellow; so many girls whom she has known during the season have sighed in vain for him. For many weeks she has been hearing him spoken about; and when a girl hears a man's name constantly, she cannot help thinking a good deal about him. She has heard Miss Millard (whose probable good fortune has been widely and openly discussed) in turns pitied for being sought for her money, and envied for being sought at all by Lord St. Briac. Is it unnatural, is it unwomanly, in Daisy to palpitate with pleasure, to forget Harry Poynter for the moment, and to give St. Briac a shy grateful glance in return for that avowal of his that he loves her?

As for him, he feels that he has gone over the border, and that he is as much on his honour now to 'go on' with Daisy as he felt himself to be half an hour ago to 'go on' with Miss Millard. She, in her sweet unconsciousness, tempts him in a way that would have been too much for St. Senanus, and that is altogether too much for St. Briac. Having told her that he loves her, he finds himself madly desirous of winning a like confession from her. He forgets the resolution he came to just now of laying bare his feelings to her, and at the same time refraining from proving the state of hers for him. At least he must learn that Daisy is not indifferent to him. Having ascertained that fact he will take time to consider what step it behoves him to take next.

He is an ardent impetuous young fellow, and he has really lost both his heart and his head to Daisy.

'I didn't know how hard hit I was myself till that girl coupled your name with Bray just now,' he goes on madly; 'then I felt that it was no use pretending even to myself that I could resign you without a struggle, Daisy darling. Tell me that I haven't made a mistake; tell me that you do care for me a little, and that you'll be my wife.'

He has got hold of both her hands, and is pressing them with a passionate force that makes her feel that he is not to be trifled with—however unjustifiable in fact the expression of his love may be, the love itself is a real true thing. She does like him very much indeed. Better, far better, than she has ever liked any one but Harry Poynter. And there are many things that make his wooing her a very sweet tribute to Daisy Eldon. She

is 'essentially human,' and she feels a wicked little flutter of gratified vanity as she reflects that this man is willing to cast away a hundred thousand a year for her sake. Ought she to reject such genuine devotion as this? she asks herself. Then she thinks a little of the disappointment of the Beaumonts if the great heiress is lost to them by reason of their son's infatuation for herself. She thinks a little of their disappointment, and a great deal of Harry Poynter; and so she answers as she ought.

'I do care for you a great deal—too much to do you the wrong it would be to marry you, Lord St. Briac. You know what a bad thing it would be for you if I were weak enough to be flattered by the great honour you have offered me into accepting it; and—you mustn't be angry with me for reminding you of Miss Mil-lard: all the world looks upon you as half engaged to her.'

'If I were wholly engaged to her it would make no difference now,' he says recklessly. 'I love you, Daisy; nothing but your own will—nothing but your own declaration that you care more for some other fellow than you do for me can part us now.'

He has lifted her hand to his lips, and is pressing kisses upon it; in another moment he will put it beyond her power to say him 'nay' by touching her pure young lips. His whole heart is in the work of gaining this girl now, and if courage will carry her, she shall be carried.

'Say you'll be my wife, Daisy; say you love me!' he pleads desperately; and Daisy with a mighty effort frees herself from his clasp, and says,

'I can't; I could a week ago: but since then, Lord St. Briac, I've seen some one I like better

than I do you, much as I really like you.'

'It's Bray after all?' he says, in bitter sad accents.

'No; it's not Bray a bit. It's some one who may never know I like him, and never care to find out.'

'Don't give me up for an idea,' St. Briac interrupts. Having committed himself to the statement of caring for Daisy, he is ready to overcome every obstacle in the way of attaining her. Surely, he argues, if he has been ready to cast a hundred thousand a year and every other consideration aside for her, she might reasonably and readily overcome any light fancy she may have imagined herself into entertaining for this other man, who is ignorant of the honour she has done him. 'Don't give me up for an idea,' he repeats ardently. 'Look you, Daisy; my name's a good one. I don't come to you dishonoured, like some fellows are who are presuming to aspire to you. And I love you, Daisy! I love you in a way that ought to win a kinder answer from you than the one you have given me.'

He has never been balked of one thing on which he has set his heart in his life, and that Daisy should hesitate now about proclaiming him triumphant is a sore trial to him. That she does hesitate, that she has not quite decided for or against him, is evident. St. Briac's earnestness, the way in which he is ready to relinquish the largest fortune of the year for her penniless sake, is very touching to her. Moreover, St. Briac has about him that air of bravery and gentleness which is the result of many generations of culture and refinement. He is a splendid lover, and she is in a paroxysm of doubt as to whether it would not be well for her to love him in

return. But, as she wavers, she hears distinctly, as if Harry were speaking them close to her ear at the moment, the words, 'But do you know, Daisy, I never cared about one of them enough to want to kiss her.' She looks round almost expecting to see him close to her. She has 'recollected him' so vividly, that she cannot forget him again, though Lord St. Briac goes on pleading his warmest; and so it is a definite refusal of the honour he has done her which St. Briac has to bear at last.

But Daisy in her outspokenness and genuineness refuses him in a way that binds him to her far more closely than Miss Millard's acceptance of him will have the power to do.

'Just a week ago I liked you better than any one else in the world,' she says apologetically; 'but since then I have thought of some one else, and liked to listen to some one else, and you ought to be the first and only one a girl has thought of for a minute.'

'I shouldn't mind your having thought of a dozen before, if you'll only think of me now,' he says.

'And that I can't do, and though I'm sorry for it in one way, I'm glad in another. If I said "yes" what a grief it would be to your family, and what a pity it would be for you! And now we'll go back.'

She opens the door as she speaks, and is out in the corridor on her way back to the ballroom in an instant, and he has no choice but to follow her. His mother's eyes are upon him anxiously and on Daisy rebukingly as they enter the room, and the girl knows that she is being hardly thought of by her hostess for a fault she has not committed. She is trying to get across to her aunt, of whom she catches a glimpse in a far-off corner, in order to implore that

she may be taken away from the bustle and the raree show, when her progress is arrested most inopportunately by Sir Bolingbroke.

'I have been hunting for you everywhere,' he says; 'where have you hidden yourself?'

'I have been looking at a picture in Lady Beauton's boudoir; some one said it was like me, and I like to know what I'm like,' Daisy says, trying to speak as if she were not anxious to work her way from him to her aunt.

'Don't be so impatient. I have been looking for you everywhere,' he murmurs. 'Do you see or have you heard that Miss Millard has defied the Beautons on their own ground, and flung St. Briac over for the returned colonial?'

'What nonsense!' she answers scornfully.

'But true nonsense, nevertheless. This young "scion of an ancient but decayed house," as old chroniclers would call him, has done a good thing for himself by stopping in town on his way home from the Bush. When a man can once make up his mind to marry Miss Millard she's not a bad sort of girl. The next is mine, if you please; you ought to give me so much poor compensation for my bitter disappointment the other day.'

She hardly heeds what he does, and so suffers him to whirl her off without a protest. She tells herself that there is no truth in his statement relative to Harry and Miss Millard, and yet it goes on ringing in her ears. How promptly, if it is true, he has perjured himself after those 'unspoken vows' he offered her but just now in the conservatory! Ah, but has she not been on the brink of committing a like offence? Did she not incline more than favourably for a few minutes to St. Briac? These thoughts fatigue her more

than the waltzing, and she pauses to recover her breath. As she stands, her hand still on her partner's arm, Harry Poynter and Miss Millard walk slowly by, close to her without perceiving her. He is bending his head down low in earnest endeavour evidently to catch every word that falls from the heiress's lips, and she is speaking in clear resolute accents that fall distinctly upon Daisy's ears.

'You must come to-morrow morning. I will prepare mamma for the news, and she will plead the cause we have at heart with my father; he cannot stand out against us three.'

'I am rested,' Daisy says, turning a white face up towards her partner; and when they pull up after the next round, she has pledged herself to become Lady Bray.

FLORAL FORECASTS FOR WINTER.

Yes, we will lay out for the coming winter; by which I do not mean merely the winter of the almanac. The seasons may be allowed to claim a certain breadth of margin.

If even your age is permitted to be indefinite—for 'a man is as old as he feels, and a woman's as old as she looks'—so, without respect to date, we may take it to be practically winter when the days are dull, dark, and frosty; when the ground is covered with snow or the air filled with driving sleet, although astronomers may call it autumn. In the same way we may believe it to be spring when every afternoon grows longer and brighter and all Nature is waking up, notwithstanding that the vernal equinox is not yet reached.

Botanists fall in with this popular idea when they give such names as *Crocus vernus*, Spring Crocus, and *Arabis verna*, Spring Wall-Cress, to plants which flower in February and early March. The Winter Aconite, in spite of its modern facing-both-ways name, *Eranthis hyemalis*, the Winter Spring-flower, will sometimes forestall both those seasons by peeping above ground while Francis Moore would tell us it is autumn still. Nevertheless, it is truly the Winter Aconite, or popularly the New Year's Gift. Also, *Leucojum vernum*, the Spring Snowflake (to distinguish it from *L. æstivum*, the Summer Snowflake) is really and truly a winter flower. On the other hand, when we have legally reached spring,

we are often treated to what Cobbett called 'the Blackthorne winter,' when hail and snow rival the blossoms of the Sloe-bush in whiteness, and prove the truth of the old French proverb:

'Avril, il est doux;
Mais quand il s'y met, c'est le pire de tous'

(April is mild; but when he sets to in earnest, he is the worst month of all). This year ('78) winter in many places did not come till spring. Lady-day brought us unladylike squalls, snowstorms, and sudden showers of hail. The snow, at least, had no right to show itself, because Snowdrops had long been over.

This preliminary explanation having been made, the very moment after you have finished reading it go and purchase (if you have not done it before) and plant in pots such bulbs as you intend to flower a little earlier than they would in the open ground, whether they be Hyacinths, Van Tholl Tulips, Narcissuses, Siberian Squills, Jonquilles, or even such modest but welcome favourites as Dog's-tooth Violets, Snowdrops, and Crocuses. It is already a little late to do so; but better now at once than still later on. The first comers at the bulb-shops are served not only first, but best, with a greater choice of varieties to select from. The retail sale of autumn-planted bulbs in general takes place from the 1st of August to the 15th of November; but after the 1st of October the cream of the crop is often gone. Moreover, Hyacinth bulbs, for instance,

are none the better for keeping after that date, and many horticultural houses plant in the open ground the stock which then remains unsold. All purchasers of Hyacinths may not be aware (and therefore it is opportune to tell them) that the bulbs of some varieties—and even of the most beautiful, and principally of the doubles—are naturally small. Without knowing this, you might refuse many undersized bulbs, supposing them to be of inferior quality. But, when such bulbs produce their blooms, it will be found that the strength and beauty of the flower-spike is by no means in proportion to the bigness, or rather to the littleness, of the bulb from which it springs.

For Hyacinths, pots deeper than usual are preferable. Fill them nearly full with good light garden earth or leaf-mould, made still lighter by an admixture of sand; plant the bulb so that its collar shall be exactly on a level with the surface of the earth, give a slight watering, and then set the pots in any cool place where they do not get too dry nor suffer much change of temperature. In six or seven weeks they will have made good roots and their leaves will begin to show themselves. They can then be transferred to a warm room, frame, or greenhouse, giving them as much air and light as possible. The same treatment is suitable for early Tulips, Jonquilles, and Narcissuses. Double Snowdrops should not be forgotten by those who prefer obesity to gracefulness.

Sundry other bulbs might be mentioned not generally known or which escape attention, although interesting and of easy culture. For instance, there is the Crimean Snowdrop, *Galanthus plicatus*, which, like the 'cuckoo, cautious bird,' is 'seldom seen, though

often heard' of. The late Van Houtte told me that as soon as he learnt, after the war, that an undescribed species of Snowdrop grew in the Crimea, he took steps to procure a large stock of it from its native habitat in the Russian peninsula, and made a good thing of the speculation, so many people were naturally anxious to procure an undoubted Crimean flower. Of its value as a souvenir there could be no question; as to its beauty, opinions are not unanimous. Robinson's *Hardy Flowers* says that *Galanthus plicatus* is similar to *G. nivalis*, but larger in all its parts except the flower, which is sometimes even smaller and of a more greenish hue. The leaves have also a longitudinal fold on both sides near the edge, from which the specific name is derived. It must not be supposed, however, that it is as pretty as the common Snowdrop, though more than this has been claimed for it. Indeed, the distinctive properties of Snowdrops gave rise to some amount of discussion in the gardening journals last spring. A recently introduced bulb from the Cape, *Hyacinthus candicans*, gives one the idea of a spike of large Snowdrops borne on a bold stem a yard or so high, although botanists have named it a Hyacinth. The number of stamens, however, is different, the new Hyacinth possessing six.

The shores of the Black and Mediterranean Seas and their islands are doubtless bedecked during the brief season when they are visible above ground with not a few still unknown flowering bulbs, whose discovery we may expect to be hastened by our annexation of Cyprus. When British subjects go to winter there for their business or their pleasure, they will be able to catch in the fact of flowering such transient

things as Crocuses and others, which complete their annual cycle of vegetation during a short portion of the year, and then escape detection by horticultural collectors in their unsuspected subterranean resting-places.

A pretty and convenient bulb for amateur indoor gardeners (to whom alone these hints are addressed) is the *Triteleia uniflora*, a white-flowered, weakly-scented bulb from Buenos Ayres, so small that six, eight, or more can be put without crowding in a medium-sized pot. The leaves resemble those of the Snowdrop, but are longer. Plant in light sandy loam, heath-mould, or the black dust which pot-gardeners compose and fabricate to imitate it. If not wanted to bloom very early the pots can be plunged to the rim in the open border, lightly covered with litter or dead leaves on the approach of frost, and transferred to warmer quarters as they are required to be brought forward. Those who are glad to welcome them the soonest possible may start them at once in the sunny window of a living-room. The flower, slightly flushed with lilac within and with green without, has somewhat the aspect of a quite small *Petunia*, with which, however, it has no relationship. There are other *Triteleias*, *T. laxa*, *laxa major*, *obscura*, and *pallida*, with violet-blue, lilac-blue, very dark-blue, and porcelain-blue flowers respectively.

The Tuberous-rooted *Begonias* have not yet made the way with the general public that might have been expected of them. None were visible this summer in the numerous public and private gardens which now adorn the metropolis of the United Kingdom. And yet they are most showy and satisfactory, even in pots (although they then some-

times shoot their first male blossoms, for the want, I believe, of sufficient root room and nourishment), and still more so in the open ground, where they do much better, produce finer fuller-coloured flowers than when grown in the house, and also bear up bravely against pelting rains—of which we have lately had only a too convincing proof—hanging out their glowing streamers and their ruddy bells, in long succession, one after the other, until the chills of October tell them that it is time to stop and make arrangements for their winter's sleep.

True, they do not lend themselves to the carpet-bedding, floral Berlin-wool work, vegetable tapestry, leaf embroidery and mosaiculture, of which the London parks have displayed this summer such admirable examples. But they only bide their time, which will surely come when they are better known. All that can possibly be said against them is the want of variety in their tints, in the great majority of which reds, crimson, scarlets, and pinks prevail. The White Queen is a useful exception. *Pearcei superba*, with its dark, rich, velvety foliage, is bright yellow, but is better suited for the house than for bedding. The most useful Tuberous *Begonias* I know, whether for masses, ribbons, or pots, are the hybrids *Chelsoni*, bright light red, *Worthiana*, brilliant scarlet, and *Chambersi superba*, pink. Tubers that are two or three years old throw up in spring more young shoots than they should be allowed to retain. The number depends upon the variety of *Begonia*, some giving more than others. Two, or at most three, stems are quite enough to leave, to make bushy flowering plants; the enthusiastic propagator, in his zeal for multiplication,

often allows only a single one to remain. The rest may be slipped off from the tuber as soon as they are three or four inches long, and treated like *Dahlia* shoots in separate pots, where they may either be kept to bloom all summer or turned out into the open ground at the end of June.

Double-flowered Tuberous *Begonias* are still in their infancy, and still dear, that is, costly. A few years hence they will be better and cheaper. Their most striking peculiarity is that the male or pollen-bearing flowers only are double, while the female or seed-bearing blossoms remain single, accounted for by the greater tendency of stamens than of pistils to assume the petal-like form. There are several doubles now in the market. It may be questioned whether any of them are really worth their present price, except as novelties and curiosities, or subjects for experiment, in the hope that improved varieties may be obtained from their cross-fertilised seed, that a pretty mother may produce a still prettier daughter. The best of those I know is the *Gloire de Nancy*, raised by M. Victor Lemoine. *Marie Lemoine* ranks close beside it, and *Emile Lemoine* is highly spoken of. The *Countess of Dudley* is light and graceful, though its efforts after doubleness are somewhat feeble. Newer than these is *President Burelle*, deep crimson-red, of dwarfish habit, a showy and attractive plant, whose full double flowers are also fine in shape. But an experienced grower, Mr. Gumbleton, opines it is nevertheless far from proving the best of the double-flowered *Begonias*, its duplication being a matter of uncertainty (some plants giving only occasionally semi-double flowers or even altogether single), although

its brilliant shade of colour always recommends it to favour.

It is probable that not a few of the Tuberous *Begonias* may turn out to be, like the old *B. discolor*, hardy outdoors in our ordinary winters—a most valuable quality, which can only be ascertained by experiment. The commoner and robust single varieties might be risked without making great sacrifices. But amateurs will, for the present, hesitate to leave out doubles in the cold; for, beautiful as they are held to be, they are yet by no means common, owing to the slow rate at which the individual varieties can be increased; one of the most difficult to propagate being the above-named *President Burelle*.

Respecting Tuberous *Begonias* it will be opportune to give a seasonable wrinkle here. They are usually purchased in winter, when the tubers, in a dormant state and recently taken out of the earth, can easily be sent dry long distances in quite small packages or parcels.

Do not buy them in that state in winter, *because*, following the example of Ash-leaved Kidney Potatoes, a certain percentage of the tubers so received will refuse to start, after planting in pots, until late in the summer, or perhaps not at all. Wait rather until the spring, and then order growing plants or struck cuttings (in the state in which young *Dahlias* are received). You will thus be sure that your *Begonias* will grow. The carriage may cost a trifle more, but the chances of disappointment will be less.

Evergreens offer a never-failing resource for winter indoor decoration. A select stock of these should always be kept in reserve, in case of need. Each amateur will have his favourites. Amongst them we ought not to forget old

friends, old both actually and potentially. The Myrtle will live, perhaps, hundreds of years. I have seen Myrtles more than a century old, which gave no signs of decay whatever. Madame Legrelle Dhanis, in her garden at Antwerp, has sixty or seventy year old Myrtles, both large-leaved and small-leaved, in tubs, which, still retaining all their vegetative faculties, flourish with the healthy vigour of youth. Similar examples of Myrtle longevity are doubtless not rare, both at home and abroad.

Of the eight or ten distinct varieties of Myrtle, some with single, some with double flowers, the broad-leaved is, to my thinking, the most ornamental as well as the freest flowering. That, however, is a matter of taste. No one need be without a Myrtle; for it strikes readily from cuttings of this year's wood and grows well in any good garden soil, especially if inclined to be loamy. It likes not to be too stingily stinted of water, and should never be let to become dry at the root, for the loss of its leaves is the consequence. Ireland, Somersetshire, and even low situations in Scotland near the sea, where it thrives and stands the winter outdoors, are all moist climates. The facility with which Myrtle sprigs strike root has often made them pleasant souvenirs. The scrap fondly treasured from a bridal bouquet may be made to adorn, as an independent pot-shrub, the silver or even the golden wedding-banquet. Agreeable fragrance pervades almost the whole Myrtle family. The Allspice-tree *was* a myrtle, until botanists converted it sometimes into *Pimenta vulgaris*, sometimes into *Eugenia pimenta*.

The Orange-tree in fruit is another charming long-lived healthily-aromatic plant for win-

ter decoration, which may be kept for years in moderate and convenient dimensions. The Lemon-tree has equal and similar merits, but is more delicate in constitution. Both are slow to come to hand. Orange-pips, which many people are fond of sowing and which make no difficulty about germinating, would be twenty or thirty years before they flowered spontaneously if left to themselves. The best plan for those who like to raise such things is to sow Citron-pips, which, if kindly treated, will make a straight upright growth of half a yard or more in the course of the first summer. These can be budded the following season, by a professional gardener, with the variety of Orange or Lemon desired, and in due time will form handsome heads that will flower after a reasonable interval. But patience is indispensable, and it brings its reward. You can inherit an Orange-tree from your ancestors, and then bequeath it to your posterity. It is no vulgar pleasure to possess a plant which (like carp and other fish that have discovered the elixir of life) never dies until it is killed, and to whom a natural death—called by the French *leur belle mort*, though I see nothing *belle* in it—seems unknown. It is with no common pride that, in showing it to friends, you remark, 'This was my great-grandmother's favourite pot-plant.' But volumes might be written about Orange- and Lemon-trees.

The Japanese Spindle-tree, *Euonymus japonicus*, and its varieties with variegated leaves, is extremely useful, being largely propagated and sold as handy pot-plants at prices which cannot deter the most economical housekeeper. It rarely flowers in Great Britain, which is no heavy loss horticulturally, although botanists might

like to see its inflorescence and its fruits ; but in the south of Europe it produces both blossoms and seeds. The variety with a bright yellow centre to the leaves and upright growth is particularly telling ; so also, though of different habit, are those with white and with yellow bordered foliage. Their doubtful hardiness is of little consequence to indoor and conservatory gardeners.

A recently-introduced evergreen, of great value as a greenhouse and window plant, is *Coprosma Baueriana*, whose variety *variegata*, with bright shining leaves having a broad yellow border and a small green centre, is particularly striking. It is of slow growth, and therefore manageable in pots ; not too easy to propagate, and therefore not so common as many other pretty things. Nor will it resist our winters outdoors. The typical unvariegated plant produces bright orange-berries, which are not often seen. There is another variety, *picturata*, also handsome, quite different from the preceding, with an irregular pale-yellow spot in the centre of the leaves. Another, *Coprosma Stocki*, with larger yellow markings and dark-green edges to the leaves, was sent out the year before last by Mr. B. S. Williams, who believes it to be much hardier than *C. Baueriana variegata*. All these *Coprosmas* are very handsome evergreens, and I stand up for them because they are ill-used and calumniated plants. The name given to them is a libel, which has no foundation in fact that I have been able to ascertain, after appealing to the learned. *Coprosma* means—excuse the coarseness—stink of dung, which is not perceptible in any part of the plant. A botanical name, once given, is not easily changed, however unjustly it may have been conferred ; so *Coprosma* still

suffers from Mr. Forster's ill-humour, who, when he found this pretty shrub in New Zealand, must have been previously put out of temper, or, in familiar phrase, had his nose put out of joint, by some less pleasing discovery.

I once had in pots a small collection of variegated Hollies, grafted low and making bushy growth, altogether not more than a foot or eighteen inches high. They were exceedingly pretty as window plants in winter, combining well with any flowering plants with which they could be associated from time to time, for they of course remained unchanged and unfaded the whole dead season through. But their hardiness caused their transfer to the open ground in spring, where they have outgrown the dimensions suitable for indoor work.

Note that all pot-evergreens, to be kept healthy and handsome, should have their leaves cleaned by washing them from time to time. When the syringe is insufficient, a soft sponge, slightly soapy tepid water, and perseverance are the most efficacious agents. Also, as they remain some time in their pots without shifting, worms that have got in should be made to get out. Besides the worm-expellers already mentioned in previous papers, a safe and effectual remedy for worms—according to Mr. James Green of the Fenham Nurseries, Newcastle—whether in pots or the open ground, is soot. Applied to pot-plants (say a dessert-spoonful of dry soot on the surface of a six-inch pot) and watered afterwards, it will be found to bring them hurrying over the sides of the pot soon after the water is applied, when they can easily be gathered and put out of harm's way. Soot also acts as an excel-

lent manure, imparting a deeper dark-green to the foliage and stimulating the roots into more healthy performance of their duty. The black surface of the earth can easily be afterwards hidden by the slightest sprinkling of powdered leaf-mould or loam. The *Revue de l'Horticulture Belge* quotes an equally economical mode of driving worms out of flower-pots: namely by watering them with an infusion of horse-chestnuts. At this season it will be easy to test the value of the recipe without delay.

Possessors of pot-plants should not be in a hurry to throw them away, at this time of year, because they are apparently dead and done for. Many merely disappear for a while, to take their annual rest. During that period many plants in the open border are killed right out by being dug in, 'full fathom deep,' or are raked off with the rubbish, tossed over the hedge, and cast to the winds or the dirt-heap in the adjoining lane, or shot together with shovelfuls of sticks and stones into the nearest field or the neighbouring meadow. It is thus that not a few flowering garden-plants—bulbs especially—'escape,' as it is called, from civilisation, and become claimants for registration in our native Flora. It is thus that plants like *Dodecotheon*, the American Cowslip, and terrestrial Orchids are so 'hard to keep,' which means that it is so hard to prevent ignorant gardeners from burying them alive. A good plan is to grow such plants in a parterre which is *never dug over*, but only carefully stirred and forked by affectionate and cautious fingers.

Hardy Primroses and Polyanthus, so cheering when their time comes round, may be had in plenty, by sowing the seed ob-

tained from good sources (the more mixed and varied the better), and pricking out the plants, as soon as they are big enough to handle conveniently, in beds where they will show their first flowers. Abundance and to spare may thus be obtained to form borders, masses, or parterres, which will more than repay the small trouble they give. But that concerns outdoor gardening; our present business is rather with flowers within. Now the great improvement in colour and size of Primroses—says 'S. W.' in the *Gardener's Chronicle* for March 2, '78—has been such of late years as to render many of them very desirable plants for pot-culture, to assist in decorating the greenhouse, or for the embellishment of room-windows, a purpose for which they are specially adapted, as they may be used either inside or out. Another great advantage is that they may be grown in almost any out-of-the-way place, and dug up with a small ball of earth just before they show bloom. Nevertheless, it is better to let them get established in pots, and then to move them under shelter as soon as wintry weather sets in towards the close of the year. A common garden-frame, in which plenty of air can be given by tilting the lights, affords the best protection, as they will not stand heat or confinement in winter. But, under cool and airy treatment, it is surprising how finely they will bloom, especially if the pots in which they are established are deep. *Appropos* to which, it has been recommended to grow them in the pots specially made for Hyacinths, which pots, although not ornamental, are well adapted to receive the long roots which Primroses and Polyanthus love to send down in search of moisture.

In a window floral display, as on a dinner-table, it is not good taste to put too much at once. To assist in the choice, a few plants that will help to enliven the short dull days that are coming shall be briefly noticed. First, there is the Christmas Rose, *Helleborus niger*. Taken up and potted in autumn, it will even forestall the feast of Christmas, and under shelter will retain the purity of its large white flowers unsoiled by rains and uneaten by slugs. Bouquet-makers treat it in this way, for the valuable winter supply it furnishes—as they also do that still larger white-flowered deciduous shrub or tree, the *Magnolia Yulan*, whose ivory blooms expand in all their beauty before a single leaf is put forth. The double yellow Wallflower may be made to come in very early. Moreover, being scarcely hardy, it is of right an indoor winter plant, propagated without difficulty by cuttings. The *Hoveas* are Australian evergreens with small pea-like dark-blue flowers. Double Daisies flourish under the treatment indicated for Primroses. The numerous and beautiful varieties of Chinese Primrose attract so persistently the florist's attention, that they need no more than a mention here; and the easiest and cheapest way to have them is to buy them just as they are coming into flower.

A curious-looking plant, with a Japanese or Chinese aspect, although it comes from the Andes of Peru, is *Oxalis Ortgiesi*, named after M. Ortgies, a Belgian horticulturist. The upper surface of its leaves is dark olive-green, the under surface violet-purple, and their form is strange and angular. Its yellow flowers are produced all winter long; and though small, they have their value then. But even without flowers the plant is

worth growing for its singular foliage. The climbing *Oxalis*, *O. scandens*, also with yellow flowers, has light-green delicate leaves. Both these, like most of their family, bid you 'good-night' by shutting up their leaflets at sunset. The *Oxalises*, a numerous genus, are, as a rule, natives of warm climates and fond of light and heat. Our own native representative, *O. acetosella*, the Wood Sorrel, held by some to be the original and genuine Shamrock, is, on the contrary, fond of shade.

I am anxious to recommend to your patronage (for which I am sure you will thank me by and by) the horticultural variety of *Prunus sinensis*, or Chinese Plum, whose double, white, long-lasting flowers contrast elegantly with its fresh bright-green young foliage (when it comes), a delicate, distinguished, high-bred looking plant, which under no gardening circumstances could possibly become vulgar. It remains quite dwarf, is not dear to purchase, and now is the time to transplant and pot it. Since the blossoms open before the leaves are fully developed, you get a very pleasing pot-shrub, whose branches are covered with thick flakes of snow. As the leaves continue to advance—which they will do before the blossoms fall; for, being sterile, they retain their beauty with great persistency—the combination of light bright-green with pure white is very chaste and elegant. The best plan is to keep them established in pots outdoors all summer, and to take them in at the approach of winter. They are perfectly hardy, but naturally flower so early that their blossoms run great risk of being spoiled by the weather. There are also double pink, and double striped-flowered Chinese Plums. Well

deserving of similar care are the Dwarf or Georgian Almond, with single ruddy blush-pink flowers, and the double white-flowered Almond. That wide-spread favourite, the *Deutzia gracilis*, requires, for the same reason, to be subjected to the same treatment. Space forbids more than the calling attention to the great utility

of the *Laurustinus* as a pot-shrub; to the provoking *not* hardy *Coronilla glauca*, with its sea-green foliage and yellow flowers; and to the species of *Tropæolum* (popularly *Nasturtium*), such as *T. tuberosum*, which, 'outdoors, begin to flower just as wintry weather sets in, and seem thereby to beg for indoor shelter. R. S. D.

MY EVENING STAR.

MID billowy clouds the full white moon
Majestic sails; and all a-tune
Are hearts to love; and thickly strown,
The golden stars gem heaven's throne.

The silent voices of the night
Speak dearer things than those of light;
Far sweeter is the nightbird's lay
Than that which sings the bird of day.

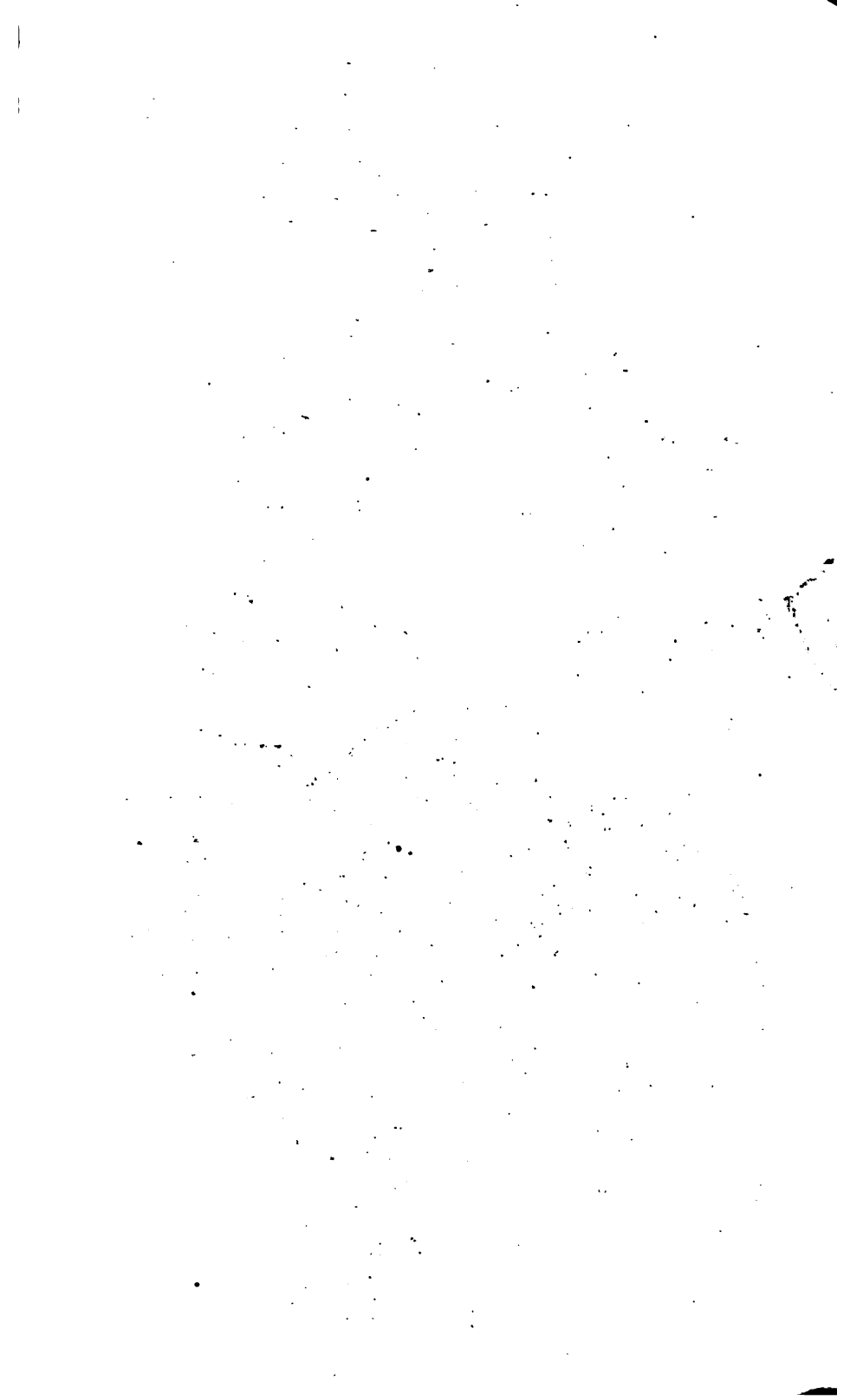
For at the eve a dreamy calm
Upon the spirit falls like balm;
At eve breathes every closing flower
The incense of the twilight hour.

O vision bright, O vision fair,
With starry eyes and wavy hair!
With dewy lips whose tender smile
Makes earth to heaven akin awhile;

With gaze that seems to beam afar,
Like yonder silver evening star,
And yet whose radiance lingers near,
To make the things of earth more dear.

Ah, would, when loving hands shall close
Mine eyes for their last long repose,—
When loving eyes shall, seeking mine,
With last fond pitying tear-drops shine,—

That *thine* those loving hands may be,
That *thine* those dear eyes blessing me,
That *thine* the smile which—near, yet far—
Lights me to heaven, mine evening star! A. H. B.



the flowers under care are the
 "Laurusticum." Although with
 the same name, the species flower
 and foliage are quite different. As
 the Laurusticum is the widest spread favour-
 ous plant, it is the most dis-
 cussed in the garden, to be sub-
 stituted to the same purpose. It
 is a very hardy plant, and the call-
 ing of the plant to the great utility

of the Laurusticum as a pot-plant
 to the provoking *not* hardy
 "Laurusticum," with its green
 foliage and yellow flower. It
 is a species of Tropæolum, or
 (very Nasturtium), and
 tuberous, which, out-
 to flower just as winter
 sets in, and seem the best
 for indoor shelter.

THE EVENING STAR.

Thou art the full white moon
 of the night, and reflect me
 thy light on the earth, and thickly-strown,
 thy light on the earth, and thickly-strown,

Thou art the full white moon
 of the night, and reflect me
 thy light on the earth, and thickly-strown,
 thy light on the earth, and thickly-strown,

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Thou art the full white moon
 of the night, and reflect me
 thy light on the earth, and thickly-strown,
 thy light on the earth, and thickly-strown,



MY EVENING STAR.

See the Verses.

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THE JOURNEY TO JERSEY.

'ANY more for the Southampton train—the French and Channel Islands mail?'

No late arrival hurries along the platform in answer to the question, so the speaker addresses the engine through a pea-whistle. There is a reponsive shriek of steam, and the lights of Waterloo Station slip past in a white wreath of vapour. Big Ben has boomed out nine, and each London church clock is counting the strokes to prove his horological accuracy, as the South-Western express speeds on its journey due south. The day has been very sultry for June, and to-night both windows of the confined *coupé* are flung down, or we should be asphyxiated with tobacco. A smoking compartment? Rather! There is a stout German pulling at a pipe, compared with which black is white; a young Frenchman smoking a cigar as strong as Samson; an artist, bound for the monoliths of Normandy, with a pipe in full blast; and two 'gilded youths,' off to the Paris Exhibition, who are also puffing at Sir Stafford Northcote's six millions. The carriage-cushions are being fiercely fumigated, and the travelling traps in the network above will be proof against all foreign infection. The day is dying out of the summer sky. The carriage-window for a while frames a sunset flush of gold in the west, which changes to a blood-red glow, and then fades into a faint spectral tinge of saffron, soon to deepen into purple shadow. The cool night breeze enters the compartment as the quivering engine

tears through the twilight. The moon throws the pale radiance of her lamp over the cathedral towers of Winchester, with the old houses of the white city of the Saxon kings clustering round the russet building, whose wrinkled walls are poems in stone, petrified pages of our rough island story.

Two steamers await the train as at midnight it pulls up at the Southampton pier. One vessel is the Havre boat, the other is bound for the Channel Islands, and both are lying in the darkness as if they were the instruments of some stealthy expedition, the refuge of some hunted fugitives. No time now to recall the historic embarkations this Southampton shore has witnessed—the departure of Charles V.; Richard I. assembling his fleet for the Crusades; Edward III.'s army sailing for Cressy; or that 'fleet majestical holding due course to Harfleur,' which Shakespeare has described, when 1500 vessels went out with 30,000 men, Nym and Bardolph and Pistol among the number. A luggage-laden porter is apt to disturb your equilibrium and historical reverie by a terse 'By yer leaf!' and a sharp-cornered box. All is bustle and animation. There is a hasty tramping of men on deck; the baggage is being lowered into the gaping chasm of the hold; bells are ringing; the engines are complaining of the delay by an impatient hiss of escaping steam; and the stilly night is disturbed by a hundred noises. I secure my berth and my supper. When I come on deck again we

are cleaving the wavelets of the Southampton Water, which shows now and again the pale image of a trembling star. To our right stretch the shadowy glades of the New Forest, where Tyrrel's arrow brought Rufus from his saddle; while that dimly-lighted façade on the left shore is a palace of pain—Netley Hospital. The Isle of Wight is in front, rising from the water like a rounded cloud, with a yellow light in the shadowy outline that lends the illusion of a planet. A fairy fleet of white-winged yachts lies off Cowes, like a colony of swans. We have glimpses, in sharp outline and heavy shadow, of Yarmouth and Alum Bay, and of the tall ghostly white cliffs and green rolling downs above Scratchell's Bay, looking weird and spectral in the glamour of the mystic moonlight; and then a bright beacon throws a bar of light across the sea and exposes the hungry rocks of the Needles, that rise, like milestones of the ocean, to our left. A brig is beating down the Channel with the glittering moonlight silvering her bellying sails, and crossing her path beyond is a steamer, whose ebony hull, touched with points of fire, burns its way through the shadowy sea where Luna has lost her strength.

The fingers of the clock have to make a circular tour before we land at Jersey, and the occupation of pacing to and fro on the deck is already growing a monotonous, not to say a hazardous, evolution. The waves are buffeting the bows, and ever and anon sending messages of spray upon the deck. The Channel becomes billowy. The boat is beginning to play a reckless game of pitch-and-toss. The fingers of the wind stir a moaning harp in the rigging. I begin to indorse the saying of Douglas Jerrold, that if Britannia

ruled the waves, it was a pity she could not rule them straighter. I am fond of the sea; but it does not return my attachment, so I go below. A mistake. The sleeping accommodation is in the dining-saloon. The berths surround a table strewed with plates and bottles and glasses and the *débris* of supper. A few fortunate passengers are asleep. Others are suffering the purgatorial pangs of sea-sickness. The sight of the sleepers, the sufferers, and the forsaken supper is liable to suggest that the table contains the deadly remains of a banquet of death, at which the *voyageurs* have been sitting, and that, overcome with the evil effects of a poisoned cup, such as Gertrude Queen of Denmark drank to Hamlet's fortune, or of some crafty dish that Lucrezia Borgia might have prepared, they are moaning in dire agony, or swooning into the pale stupor that knows no waking. The steward hastening, like a good Samaritan, to mutinous stomachs; the groans and protestations of the prostrate sick; the presence of fatty meats on the table; and the stifling, stuffy, subtle atmosphere,—drive me to sentry duty above again. The rolling deck is deserted, save by six feet of Ulster abaft the smoke-stacks, with a cigar in its mouth that gleams like a diminished danger-signal. Ulster surveys the desolation like a Marius surveying the ruin of Carthage. There is a sheltered seat under the lee of the paddle-boxes upon which I can stretch myself out under cover. A trembling lamp hangs like a yellow star in the dark rigging above, and sheds a fitful Rembrandt-like light upon the sable shadows on deck. Watching its troubled reflection, with a lullaby made by the waves racing by the vessel's side, the churning pad-

dles, and the steady rhythmic beat of the engines, I cheat King Mal de Mer of a victim, and obtain a brief apology for sleep.

Gradually the beat of the toiling engines and the flutter of the paddles steal upon me. The lamp in the rigging does not look so ethereal now. Day is dawning in a thread of cold gray in the eastern sky-line—a thread so narrow that the tumbling waves seem to break over it and wash it away. But the skein of breaking sky stretches into a broader band, and the colour now is of steel-like blue. Then a hem of pale-amber light appears, and the murky waste of mist above it dissolves into strange purple outlines. The yellow tint becomes tinged with crimson and carmine, and then a rosy red of fan-shaped streaks extends in a bow, rendering the nearer clouds luminous. A black speck, perhaps a steamboat, sails from the leaden-hued vapoury sea into that haven of fire, and is lost. Then there is a glitter where the sea and sky meet each other, as if Danaë were taking a morning bath. Streamers of gold shoot out their long lines of electric light, and presently a shield of glowing copper, a disc of blood-red flame, a ball of burnished gold, rises and rides upon the water. It is a sight whose impressive beauty only a 'sun-shipper' could appreciate, only a Turner could hope to throw upon canvas, only a Ruskin could describe in words. The heavenly lamplighters extinguish the stars; the pale Queen of Night dies with a sickly pallor on her wan face; and now the King of Day reigns triumphant, dispensing diamonds and jewels of gold with royal magnificence over his wide ocean realm, and the thousand subject waves are clapping their exultant hands in joyful acclamation. Only

the monotonous engines, and the paddles lathering the sea into so much shaving-water, seem insensible of the glow of day; for the gulls are wheeling in graceful flight in the white wake of the boat, and the sun is touching the sails of a distant merchantman; bundles of shawls that have been lying *perdu* on deck become animated, and promenade on the bridge; and there is a smell of breakfast from the Black Hole of Calcutta down-stairs, which is giving up its half-dead. There are a group of soldiers playing at cards in the bows, whose red coats give a picturesque dash of colour to the dingy boat; several 'Five-pounders'—a designation given by the Channel Islanders to holidaying cockney 'cads' who visit Jersey—are promenading in that aggressive dress and counterfeit jewelry which give additional vulgarity to their manners; a travelling theatrical company are striving, like Mark Tapley, to be jolly in the steerage, although the low comedian looks very lugubrious, and the leading lady, seasick, is more deathlike than she will appear in the dithery dying scenes on the stage of the Theatre Royal, St. Helier's.

Contending tides are lashing each other into foam round the three white lighthouse towers on the Casquets, whose grim greedy granite reefs gleam crimson in the morning sunshine, as if they were stained with the blood of the brave men who, battling with the elements, have met with a remorseless reception on these dolorous rocks. Three specks, blue and indistinct in the greens and grays of the glancing sea, are pointed out as Guernsey, Alderney, and Sark. The specks rise out of the sea, and soon the steam is shut off, and we are gliding over the glassy water of the mag-

nificent harbour of Guernsey, whose rampart of rock rises to an imposing height, with houses climbing up its steep sides. Comely aborigines bring fresh-gathered flowers and fruit on board, their ruddy complexions contrasting strangely with our wan faces 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of'—sea-sickness. We exchange few passengers, and soon the paddles are revolving again. Those dependent islands to the left are Jethon, Herm, and Sark. Jethon is a simple wave-washed rock; Herm boasts of one house and a large population of rabbits, and was sold by auction in London last year, when a fine opportunity presented itself to an amateur Robinson Crusoe or a disciple of Zimmermann; while Sark is the largest and most cultivated of the three tributary islands. It has a population of several hundred people and some savage coast-scenery, whose poetic wildness suffers a scandalous neglect at the hands of English artists.

Due south to Jersey, now three hours off. Behind lies the rocky coast of Guernsey. Passengers are pointing out the situation of the house of Victor Hugo on the island. It is the surpassing seascapes of coast-scenery of Guernsey he has painted in *Toilers of the Sea* and other efforts of his genius. The bowsprit of the pitching steamer now points to a gray cloud, which is

said to be Jersey. The most absorbing excitement on board now is to watch the nebulous outline as it slowly develops into great granite rocks and tree-fringed fields and whitewashed farmhouses and martello towers. Truth to tell, the island does not look particularly pleasing from the sea. The rocks are grim and sombre; the shore is a desolate waste; the silence and savagery of Nature abound. But this rough coast is really the secret of Jersey's green lanes and fertile fields, protecting the land as it does from the sweeping violence of the Atlantic gales. It is the forbidding casket that enshrines an emerald gem of purest lustre. The crew are now hauling up the luggage from the abyss of the hold. Along the red granite rocks from the Corbrière Lighthouse, past St. Brelade's Bay, past Le Fret Point, past Noirmont Tower, the steamer is hailed from signal-post to signal-post. And now we are filled with the beauty of St. Aubin's, with its white houses growing up among the trees, and its crescent of shining sand and its bay of green and blue; and then, bang! the gun goes from the cannon on the commanding crag of Fort Regent that tells all St. Helier's that the Southampton packet is touching at the pier. The powder was hardly needed, for all the island seems drawn up on the landing-stage.

STREPHON.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. XII.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

You see them around on the trees and the ground,
Saddening some with their gloomy prognostic;
And so you may know how to find them below
Duly arranged in a Double Acrostic.

I.

Its value nowhere is set down,
But you may take it for a crown.

II.

Defensive, we have oft enjoyed it :
Offensive, we had best avoid it.

III.

When tired of study, reading, writing,
He used to set two spiders fighting.

IV.

The last twelve months we've heard enough about him.
What would the Eastern Question be without him?

V.

Sure those of Bacchus must have been
Scarce fit to see or to be seen.

VI.

This never-failing sign of spring
Doth fickle April always bring.

THETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the November Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by October the 10th.

ANSWER TO No. VIII. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

(Published in the Holiday Number.)

- | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | W | O | R | D | S | W | O | R | T | [| H |
| 2. | E | R | A | T | | | | | | | O |
| 3. | L | E | A | D | E | N | H | A | L | | L |
| 4. | C | U | R | I | A | T | I | | | | I |
| 5. | O | | V | | | | I | | | | D |
| 6. | M | | A | | N | | N | | | | A |
| 7. | E | | | D | | | W | | | | Y |

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aaraxes, Abacus, Acipenser, Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Beatrice W., Beauty, Better late than Never, Bon Gualtier, Brief, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cats & Co., Cerberus, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Domino, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, Etak, Excelsior-Jack, Frau Clebsch, General Buncombe, Gnat, Griselda, G. U. E., Hampton Courtier, Hazlewood, H. B., Henricus, Hibernicus, Incoherent, Kanitbeko, L. R., Manus O'Toole, Mrs. Dearhat, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Murra, Non sine gloria, Old Log, Patty Probity, Pud, Racer, Roe, Shaitân, Spes, The Borogoves, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Try, Tweedledum, Verulam, Ximena, and Yours truly—59 correct, and 24 incorrect : 83 in all.

ANSWER TO No. XI. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | S | H | E | S | H | E | B | W | U | G |
| 2. | A | | L | | I | | B | | | I |
| 3. | I | | C | | O | | L | | M | K |
| 4. | N | | E | | O | | B | | U | L |
| 5. | T | | E | | E | | N | | | S |

Explanatory Notes.—Light 1. See Longfellow's *Hiawatha*. 3. Iona. 5. The seven years between twelve and twenty.

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Alma, Antagonist, Araba, Bon Gualtier, Caller Herrins, C O M, Elaine, Etak, Excelsior-Jack, General Buncombe, Gnat, H. B., Incoherent, Kanitbeko, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Pud, Shaitân, The Snark, and The Borogoves—20 correct, and 33 incorrect : 53 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Aunt Charlotte's solution to No. X. was received too late to be credited. Cat and Kittens.—See Biographical Dictionaries for Oderico.

LONDON SOCIETY.

NOVEMBER 1878.

CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XXVIII.

PARIS.

THE Paris expedition had proved a brilliant success. Mrs. de Saumarez's pet hotel gave special satisfaction to every member of her party. Lady Molly praised the lively situation; Cressida the neat, tasteful decorations and ingenious arrangements; Alec the *cuisine*; and Joe the not exorbitant charges. The enforced economical habits of his youth had kept him from acquiring either the turn or the taste for throwing money out of doors and windows. As for the weather, they were enjoying a kind of Indian summer; but even when it rained, who cared, whilst the streets were so gay and well lighted, the population so happy-looking, so set upon making the best of life, and apparently so successful? Why, the sun was hardly missed before he began to shine again, and sadness and soberness had small chance of surviving in such an atmosphere.

The theatres were all open, and formed the favourite amusement of the party, Joe excepted. The performances, during which he understood next to nothing of what was going on, naturally

bored him to extinction, or to sleep at the best; he got off these entertainments when he could. Even Cressida had at last come to despair of ever effectually reforming his French.

Lady Molly was in Elysium. It was all new; it was all delicious—the shop-windows, the Louvre, the play, the opera, and last, but not least, the select little parties in certain higher diplomatic circles, where she and Elise had many connections and acquaintances. Still though so thoroughly diverting for a change, it was not the sort of life that appealed to her individuality, or in which she showed to the highest advantage, or that she would have cared to last. Playing outdoor games with her brothers, riding, skating, chasing the black pigs and the poultry, rat-hunting, and so forth—all this was infinitely better fun for a permanency, and, out of her native medium of English, exclusive, country home-life, her prestige and importance paled a little.

Joe was, or supposed he ought to be, enjoying it all like the rest. It was very novel and rattling, only a trifle too bewildering now and then. As when, for instance,

they were all in their box at the opera—a party of distinguished foreigners, the observed of all observers—and he found himself slinking in the background, awkward and restless. Or when the large reception-room they shared at the hotel was filled with Elise's visitors in the afternoon—British aristocrats, American plutocrats, hybrid fashionables, fluent attachés—never in his life had he felt so like a fish out of water. At such moments he was seized with a huge and impatient wild wish that he and Cressida could suddenly be transported back to the farm, or to Mavis Lodge, the quiet hiding-place ready and waiting for them at his favourite Seacombe. Ah, the effervescing life, constant variety, and novel tone were as pleasant and enticing to Cressida as they were uncongenial to him; so much he must feel, and an increased sense of the distance between them (had it somehow widened lately?) troubled him not a little. Fresh reminders to him of the existence in her of something that eluded his grasp; something invisible, intangible, but he knows that it is there, and goes groping about for it as we hunt for an object in the dark, stumbling and getting knocks for our pains.

Cressida found the atmosphere decidedly inebriating; it was one in which she delighted to shine. If she had kept in the background instead of exerting her cosmopolitan social talents to the utmost, she would have been practically shut out from the flattering notice and amusing intercourse of the swarm of friends that came buzzing round Elise and Lady Molly, all strangers to her, and to whom Joe, no cosmopolite, did not take at all. Then there were drives, there were plays, there were fêtes, there were excursions,

and the key-note was always pleasure—pleasure of a different sort, too, from that which was to be the butter to her bread through-out life.

Sometimes she said to herself that she wished Alec were away. Yet how much of the zest of it would have gone with him! He was at home here, felt his advantage; and though the charm of such distractions was not fresh to him as it was to herself, there was something infatuating in the present situation, and that was becoming more and more so every day.

Here was Lady Molly Carroll, with her youth and her fairness and her coronet and her Three per Cents—his bride that might be for the asking. It did infinite credit to his skill at sleight of heart that, with his divided mind, he should have gone on temporising so long without setting her distinctly against him. Adept though he was, the crisis must end, and that soon. Cressida knows it; he knows it, and that things are being driven on to a point when he will have to relinquish his double game.

Cressida's spirits, recruited by excitement, made her excessively charming to every one. Joe began to think that it *had* only been change that she needed; that the fresh scene and the fillip of this holiday-week were working wonders, which would prove the trip worth the bother; whilst for his own reward he looked forward to the quiet coming week or two at Seacombe.

When, for months past, had she been so lively and playful and talkative? when had her eyes shone so, her step been so brisk and elastic, her colour so bright and clear?

And when she and Lady Molly chanced simultaneously to express their fervent desire to stay another

week, it was *not* Joe, though he groaned inwardly, who vetoed the proposition. Elise could be very inflexible. She refused to listen, would not take the suggestion seriously, asked if they wished to settle down there altogether, as in that case she would think of it; but in spite of the light tone she assumed, it was clear that heaven and earth would not move her to consent.

Already, indeed, she had wished several times that they had never come. The expedition had been a false move, she saw, and might have foreseen, but that she had suffered her own private craving for the amusement of the trip to override her judgment. She had helped deliberately to checkmate herself. That match was slipping through her fingers—the match she had felt nearly sure of a month ago.

She might have managed ill, she owned, but then Lady Molly did not play her cards well, and Cressida was simply incorrigible. Lastly there was Alec, perverse and unaccountable, conducting himself one day as though tacitly protesting that he was only waiting for a look of encouragement from Lady Molly to place himself and his fortune at her disposition, and ever and anon, in chance ways, giving one to suspect that half a smile from other lips was worth more to him than the hand and the heart of the girl he stood professed to be wooing.

As to Cressida, Elise was posed.

A lingering regard, or rather feeling of *camaraderie* for one she had liked, had induced her to hazard some observations breathing advice. The advice in itself was good, though annoying, but the tone irritated, without leaving any other impression. Elise, who surmised now and then that there was a side to Cressida's nature

that had never been grasped by her, felt at sea when it came to things that could not be treated facetiously.

But to Alec, with whom she still retained some influence, she meant to speak on the subject, and speak home. She was not going to appeal to his 'better feelings,' or whatever these might be represented by in his composition—she would take the practical view, merely confine herself to facts, about which there could not be two opinions,—though he might become oblivious of this for a time, and not recognise his error till the day was lost. The girl had pride, her parents had pride for her, and it was a question whether the present situation could be tolerated a day longer.

She got him on the subject in jest one morning, when they were alone, and then insensibly contrived to shift from play into earnest, hoping thus to surprise the truth from him.

'I wonder how long you think,' she said philosophically, 'that Lady Molly will go on like Patience on a monument—smiling at Indecision, as personified by yourself, Alec?'

'I never think about it at all,' he replied frankly.

'But you should, at least unless you are willing—to save yourself the trouble of making up your mind—to let it go adrift altogether. Sometimes I have thought that is what you really intend, and that for some reason you wish to set her against you.'

Alec made an impatient gesture. 'She was uncommonly sharp to me last night,' he said; 'I suppose I've offended her again somehow. Upon my honour, I—' he stopped short in his protest, uncertain to what he was going to commit himself.

'Well, I should say from my

own observation it was pretty clear how your case stands. That she may once have liked you, I believe, but on that very account is naturally the more piqued, and perhaps, as you suspect, alienated now.'

'What have I done?' said Alec, laughing. 'Did you represent me to her as a model of good conduct and all that? because, if so—'

'The Carrolls are not a strait-laced set,' interposed Elise mildly, 'as you very well know. Still I do not think it is good taste, and most certainly it is bad policy, openly to prefer Mrs. Kennedy's society to hers, as you so constantly do, without the slightest hesitation.'

'Do you mean to say that she is jealous?' he asked.

'O, no,' returned Elise judiciously, 'I do not think Lady Molly could condescend to be jealous of such a hollow relation as yours to an old love married and done for. In her place I should find such weakness and irresolution an effectual cure for any tender weakness. What girl would not be disenchanted at having it made so plain to her how unable you are to resist the amusement of paying unmeaning court in another direction? It shows you prefer another's play to her earnest. Of course the choice rests with you, but it no longer, I think, rests with you to put off making it.'

Alec looked neutral. Free to Elise to think her words had fallen on idle air. They had made some impression, though.

He suspected she was right: that Lady Molly's eyes were opened wider now, that an idea might be dawning on her that all this while she had been serving as a blind, an idea which, if once it entered in, his cause with her was lost.

Good-bye, then, to that inviting harbour into which he had once set his sails intending to steer. Had he not been a fool to palter and procrastinate? What had he got by it? An ethereal flirtation he must abandon now, and not look back. It might not be too late, but no half measures will serve. Lady Molly and the world. Has life anything to offer him so good as this?

When Elise's refusal was understood to be irrevocable, the only question was how to make the most of the days that remained to them. Their last night was that of the first representation of a new opera, *La Reine de Bengale*, one that Cressida had been specially desirous to see. But that, also, had to be given up. Alec's strenuous efforts to procure places for that evening had failed. Everything was taken in advance.

Mrs. de Saumarez and Lady Molly consoled themselves. They were dining with their friends of the Embassy. Alec proposed to join the evening party later on; he, too, had gone out to an early dinner with a Parisian acquaintance; so Joe and Cressida at the hotel had their evening meal *tête-à-tête*. It had been a racketing day. The party had been to Versailles and back, and Cressida, directly the outward stimulus of talk and stir was removed, relaxed a little, nervously upset, over-tired and over-strung. She had a headache, and Joe made her lie down on the sofa. It was early still, the whole evening was before him, and presently he asked if she minded his going out 'for a smoke.' It was an awful penance for him to remain boxed up in the precincts of the hotel, she knew; he writhed and fidgeted in a distressing manner. He liked wandering through the streets, if only for the freedom, open air, and escape

from drawing-room influences; so she begged him not to stay on her account. She was tired, and would probably not stay up late. Joe availed himself of his leave with much alacrity. He should go for a stroll, with his pipe, perhaps look in at the Cirque des Elysées, he remarked complacently, as he should be out without any of his fine friends, who might turn up their aristocratic noses at so low an entertainment.

Cressida felt she ought to be glad of the prospect of a few hours' solitude and quiet. She was conscious of the effect on her of the Parisian whirl, and that it threatened her with vertigo now and then, under existing conditions.

'Tis an awkward thing to play with souls,' was what she was now beginning to realise; and the worst awkwardness of it all is that the integrity of one's own soul is sure to suffer from the game.

She had had one or two proofs of that already, trifling but significant. Her old resolution, judgment, clear sight, true feeling, were embarrassed to a degree where they ceased to have power to regulate her conduct. She had yielded herself up to enervating influences, lost herself in introspection and analysis, till she seemed to have parted with perception of all sharp general distinctions, and was able to persuade herself at moments that black was white, or might be much the same thing.

There was that in her mood to-night that forbade repose. Quietness and silence soon became intolerable. She paced the room restlessly, repeating to herself how glad she was that they were going away to-morrow, though the sudden imminent break-off was difficult to realise. But it did not do for her to get these glimpses of delicate pleasures, and self-expansion, and conquest in spheres that

could never be hers, and which appealed to her too strongly for her safely to trust herself within their attraction.

The click of the door-handle arrested her rapid train of thought. Alec de Saumarez entered suddenly, stopping short for a moment, rather taken aback to find her by herself.

'What, are you alone?' he said, surprised. 'I thought—'

'Yes, deserted, as you see,' replied Cressida, smiling. 'Joe has gone for a walk, to the circus or something. The others are dining out, you know. Why, what is the matter? you look so disconcerted and crestfallen.'

'I took for granted I should find some of them still. You know the desperate efforts I made to get the opera-box for you all to-night. At the last moment one has come into my hands, by accident. Baron Von Asten, whom I have been dining with, has given up his to me.'

'How provoking!' It was Cressida now who looked disconcerted and crestfallen. It had been the wish of her heart to go to-night. 'And now Joe has gone off disporting himself in one direction, Mrs. de Saumarez and Lady Molly in another. How vexatious!'

Alec's eye lit up with characteristic vivacity. He waited a moment, as if expecting her to speak, and then said,

'But you will go, I hope, won't you? You will let me take you there—' Then remarking the hesitation in her face, he added, 'Why, surely there can be no objection to that?' in a tone as of extreme bewilderment at the notion that there could be the ghost of an objection.

Cressida hesitated still, seeking about diligently for an excuse, an obstacle, and finding none.

'Do you think they'll be frightened if they return first,' he asked, laughing, 'and will think you've been spirited away? Because you can leave a line or a message to explain, and say where you are.'

She still seemed to demur. Alec's blank astonishment at it continued. Cressida perceived something strange and awkward in her reluctance. She had talked so much of her wish to be at the opera to-night, expressed her disappointment in such unmeasured terms. Her only objection could be to going thus in Joe's absence.

'He wouldn't like it,' was the phrase in her mind. How conventional, goody, childish, it sounded! A *bourgeois* idea—to Alec incomprehensible, probably.

And no doubt the natural thing would have been for there to have been no objection.

But the line previously taken forced her into a false position now; trifles took false weight, and she felt herself called upon to make much of an insignificant thing.

'Well?' said Alec. He was getting impatient.

'I'll be ready in ten minutes,' she replied.

'That's right,' said he, and went to see after the carriage, Cressida to dress for the opera.

It would have been silly to decline, she said to herself now. It was a little freak, and she was blindly bent on getting all the pleasure possible out of it. Joe couldn't reasonably object to it; and if he did, it would be too late, she would have had it; and if he chose to be angry she would only have the pacifying of him, which she would manage somehow. So vanish everything but her own present gratification! For once in her life she would do a wild thing (if it was a wild thing), be

reckless on her own responsibility. They were going home to-morrow—back to school, she said, laughing.

Soon she reappeared, an inimitably pretty sight, in a delicate cream-coloured fanciful costume of some oriental-looking material, with lace wreathed round her throat, and a sparkling aigrette in her hair.

Alec was waiting, the little *coupé* he had engaged was in attendance below, and they drove off, laughing at the impromptu escapade. Cressida, for her part, was not going to let narrow old-fashioned notions or grave reflections interfere with her perfect enjoyment of the present hour.

'It would really have been too hard-hearted of you to refuse to go,' he said, 'after the unheard-of trouble I've been taking all the week to get you the box.'

'I think it would,' said Cressida gaily. 'So if you like to believe I victimised myself, and consented out of purely charitable and disinterested motives, you may. Only I oughtn't to take credit for more than I deserve. I had set my heart, I confess, on seeing *La Reine de Bengale*, and this is our last evening.'

'Our last?' he repeated, with prompt and significant emphasis.

'In Paris,' she concluded.

'Don't say it so solemnly, as if it was to be our last on earth.'

'Well,' he said, 'when I remember what is hanging over my head, I feel ill, I confess, at the thought of England to-morrow.'

'So bad as that?' laughed Cressida incredulously.

'You should know why.'

'I?'

'At least you know what awaits me there—' He stopped, and then resumed: 'But I must tell you my mother will give me quarter no longer—no reprieve, she says.'

Again Cressida laughed. He demanded why.

'You amuse me,' she said, 'when you *will* talk of giving your hand to Lord Blackorton's daughter as if it were putting your head on the block.'

'Well, and no wonder,' he retorted. 'Isn't it worse? When your chances of heaven lie rather in this world than the next, you don't let go your hold of them without—'

They drew up before the opera-house at this moment.

It was a gala night, and the showy entrance-hall and staircase presented a spectacle of brilliancy rare even in Paris. A world of celebrities in beauty, fashion, art, power, wealth, and rank, native and foreign, were thronging in. The interior was full of overflowing with one of those dazzling audiences thirst for novelty can bring together. So many charming women—charming toilettes, at least—and so many famous men, or foremost men, as do not often come together under one roof. Yet even in this blaze Cressida was not overlooked. She puzzled people. She was not French, they saw; yet there was nothing specially English about her, and much on the contrary both in herself and her dress the very reverse of the typical attributes of the insular maid or matron. She was happy, elated, talked fluently and well, and looked bewitching.

She had said to herself when she decided to go that, being a stranger and with few Parisian acquaintances, her appearance there with Alec would pass completely unnoticed. She soon found it otherwise, as during the overture curious glances were levelled at their box from all parts of the house within view. Every one was straining to get a

better sight of that charming-looking young creature in white and diamonds and of that tall good-looking cavalier behind,—English, evidently, from his general appearance and deportment, but with a grace of address most Frenchmen might envy,—and whose numberless little attentions and exceeding courteous manner were sufficient to inform sagacious observers that he was neither brother nor husband to his fascinating companion.

So much admiring notice from outsiders was gratifying perhaps, but embarrassing. She drew back a little, shaded by the curtain, and talked to Alec. Then she determined to attend conscientiously to the opera, which had just begun.

She had really been anxious to hear it, but found an unaccountable difficulty in fixing her thoughts. Musical and artistic curiosity and interest slept, and eluded her efforts to rouse them. *La Reine de Bengale* proceeded triumphantly, but she was not deriving the least artistic pleasure from the entertainment.

She might plausibly lay the blame of it on the performance. The music was rather commonplace, the execution disappointed her expectations. The real attraction, the real success, lay in the *spectacle*, which was unimaginable. Indian temples, dazzling processions, armies of slaves, elephants, impossible vegetation, paradisiacal ballets—it was pagantry carried to its utmost extent, and overpowering everything else. But it impressed her like a childish pantomime. Even the singers were but glorified apes, and in the passions enacted she could see nothing but how hollow they were.

'You don't care much about all this,' remarked Alec, as the curtain fell on the second act. He

had been watching her, and perceived how forced and wearisome were her attempts to follow the performance.

'Well, don't you think it is rather too noisy and decorative?' she said, with a sigh. 'As to the music, I must confess myself very much disappointed. It may be my own fault, but—'

'No, no,' interposed Alec; 'I never saw such a piece of solemn rubbish in my life. Two long acts are quite enough, in my opinion. Shall we go now?'

She acceded readily. He put on her cloak, took her down to the door, where they had not to wait a minute for their *coupé*. Alec was a magician in these little matters. Never any hitches in a pleasure he had taken in hand. One thing at least he had learnt well—to play lord of misrule.

'Only eleven o'clock,' he remarked, as they went out; 'we can't possibly go back immediately. What do you say to stopping at the Café X—? Instead of a third act we can have supper there.'

Cressida remonstrated, 'Nay, I think we should be going home now.'

'If we do we shall find nobody in,' he expostulated. 'Besides, I feel that I've cheated you into the trouble of coming to see a stupid opera, and must make up for it somehow. What can I offer you by way of reparation?'

Supper at the Café X—, it appeared.

'Here goes, then, for a third act,' laughed Cressida to herself, as he gave the order to the driver and got in after her. She had accepted the frolic as such, and might as well carry it through now.

The supper did not detain them long. It was a sort of ideal repast—a fairy meal fit for Titania

herself; just a pretence for another half hour of *badinage* and repartee. As before, strangers' eyes sought them with marked admiration; and O, the politeness of everybody, the brilliancy, the ingenious luxuries, the stir, the exhilaration! It was divine!

When they got into the *coupé* again, Cressida overheard Alec's directions to the driver this time. He wanted a fourth act yet, then, to be represented by a turn up and down the Champs Elysées to prolong the drive. She objected as they rolled off, asking if it was not late enough already. Alec rallied her on her impatience.

'One would think the world depended on your being home by half-past eleven sharp,' he said, laughing. 'Is that the time at which you put all the lights out at the farm? But then we are in Paris.'

It would only make a quarter of an hour's difference, Cressida thought, as she let him have his own way, lingeringly reluctant herself to cut short their *tête-à-tête*. Scrupulous timidity cuts us out of half the delights of life. A warning Alec had applied early. His society was pleasant, too pleasant; she felt all this must be drawing to a close—Alec would have said, a climax. The depths of her nature were beyond his apprehension, or rather he read them wrong; but no one had ever understood the surface so well, so readily responded to her moods and lighter qualities, known so well how to please, to provoke, to touch, to inspire—why not to infatuate? Whilst enjoying his mastery of her smiles and her *piquant* speeches, sweet or sad, he felt often as if enslaving her heart and mind in silence and secret. And then he would say to himself there was nothing the man whom she loved could not afford to give up for her.

'Can you wonder,' he said by and by, 'that I'm in no hurry to see the end of the evening? I'm told I may look on it as my last.'

'Your last!' said Cressida, echoing him mockingly; 'why will you persist in talking as if you were going to die?'

'Not yet, I hope,' he said promptly. 'Only, as you are aware, my mother has set her heart upon my marrying Lady Molly.'

'Do you not think,' remarked Cressida wickedly, 'that it would be a pity to disappoint her?'

'And she warns me,' he continued, disregarding the interruption, 'that I am running my chance there rather hard, or, in point of fact, ruining it as fast as I can.'

'Is it true, do you think?'

'It seems,' he continued diffidently, 'that Lady Molly has taken it into her head to be jealous of you. At least, she has been huffed at something, I'm to understand; and I suppose I may have given her cause, now and then.'

'It is very foolish of you,' remarked Cressida gravely.

'What is?'

'To offend Lady Molly. She is such a good creature.'

'Then your advice to me is that I should marry her?' said Alec, looking at her interrogatively.

She did not look back. Her glove was off, and she was staring down absently at the flashing stones in her rings.

'O,' she said disdainfully, 'please do not ask me to bid or forbid the banns. It is such a terrible responsibility, you know, for any one to undertake.'

'To be, or not to be,' said Alec, laughing suddenly. 'But I wish you would tell me frankly what you think of her yourself.'

'I've told you. I think she is a good girl; neither vain, nor frivolous, nor selfish, nor flighty, nor foolish—'

'*Après?*' said he.

'She is rich, of course, and stands high in the world. But why do you make me repeat what you know already—'

'Well, go on.'

'Isn't that enough? I've sounded her praises sufficiently, surely, even for you?'

'Yes; and now I want to hear her faults.'

'I sha'n't enumerate them,' said Cressida playfully.

'Not if I tell you; not if I want you to?' he urged, in the same tone.

'No. Either you know them; or if you do not, it means that they do not exist for you.'

'If ever I'm in danger of forgetting them, I've not far to look to be reminded,' he said, glancing into her face, lit up by a passing flash from a lamp as they drove by.

For in such moments Lady Molly would appear to him simple to monotony, downright to rudeness, rigid to awkwardness.

'Why don't you come out with them at once?' he continued; 'say she is brusque and cold, and impassive and literal.'

'Those are not faults,' said Cressida. 'Perhaps they are even advantages, though I grant you they seem to me to show a want of something.'

'Of what?'

'Of susceptibility to sweet things,' she said musingly; 'of taste, perhaps, when it comes to finer and delicate impressions—a whole side of life.'

'I wonder what a life would be like with that side shut out?' he said quickly. 'Whether worth having? You should know.'

Cressida was startled, discomfited, thrown off her self-possession for the instant.

He laughed, as he looked at her, saying insinuatingly,

'Will you tell me one can forget, or stop regretting, or even wish to? I thought there, at least, we must be agreed. For it was you who taught me how sweet some things might be, when you looked at me for the first time, long ago. That is the part of my life I should choose to have over again.'

'Ah, forget it. That is the best advice I could give you.'

'You shall not rob me of the recollection,' he said persistently; adding, 'If I'm to forget, you must put yourself out of existence first.'

Cressida, perplexed, said coldly, artificially,

'You should be wiser. Have not I been?'

'Then you mean that you're happy—satisfied?' he asked expressively; 'that you feel no want in your life? Your—'

'Hush!' she broke in quickly.

'You love him?' said Alec.

'He loves me,' Cressida replied wistfully.

'Are you going to make love the test of desert?'

'A fair test,' she said.

'So I think; but you don't count it so. Did you ever hear any one volunteer to break with the world for your sake?'

'Never,' said Cressida quickly. 'If I did, I should not believe him.'

'But if he made you believe him; if he gave you proof; took his chances in one hand and threw them away that he might hold out the other to you—'

Her lip curled slightly. 'Well, what then?'

'You would laugh at him, turn away, say he was mad, or worse, would you not?' said Alec, though not in a tone as if he thought it in the least. 'So you see love is no test at all in your eyes. Why, if it were, we should not be here now, nor ever have raised these

barriers between us,' he muttered restlessly.

Cressida's eyes flashed a little. 'Why will you harp on that? Let me alone. Do you know that you are saying wild things?'

'Am I? It is quite likely. I catch myself thinking wild things now and then—wishing such wild things as that you and I were in some far-away country, where it would be for me to make up to you for a dull world we had agreed to forget—'

Cressida raised her hand instinctively, with a sign imploring him to be silent. He obeyed, and taking her hand, suddenly raised it to his lips for a moment. The next minute the carriage drew up before the door of the hotel.

Cressida dismounted and went up the stairs alone. She came into the *salon* looking, as she felt, nervously strung up and excited. The agitated feeling was so excessive that it drove her to try and carry it off by an affectation of defiant merriment towards Elise and Lady Molly, who had just come in, and were there, awaiting their return—not in the best of humours with her, as was clear. After interchanging a few passes, veiled under the guise of polite nothings, Cressida flitted off to her own apartment, meeting Joe in the anteroom. It was half dark, but she became instantly aware of breakers ahead.

'Where have you been?' he said, with a sharpness of intonation that at another time would have struck her dumb. But insensibly she was prepared for something.

'To the opera. I left a message. Did you not get it?'

'Yes; I came in early, and thought there was time still to join you, and went myself. You had left the box already.'

'Yes,' said Cressida, beginning

to disentangle herself from her wraps. 'The music was stupid, so we went away after the second act; had some supper at the Café X—, and then drove home by the Champs Elysées.' She spoke with a gay unconcern; not natural, though.

'Another time you'll do nothing of the sort,' he said hastily. 'Pray did it never occur to you that I shouldn't allow you to go out in that way?'

'I did not think that you would mind,' said Cressida slowly, putting her hand up to her head with a vacant look.

'Didn't you?' he laughed oddly. 'Are you sure of that, Cressida? Take care what you say.'

Certainly she had better. Her going, it seemed, *had* displeased him intensely, and in this unaccustomed mood he was not quite himself, and hardly knew what he said. Only his rough manner and reproachful, masterful tones jarred upon her violently just then, and provoked her to retort coldly,

'I had no rational excuse for refusing what nobody could rationally object to.'

'You'll please to remember it's for me to say what is rational for you in such matters,' he returned, 'and not to decide for yourself again, since I see you are pretty sure to decide wrong.'

Cressida, in her mixed irritation and dismay, felt floored, and said deprecatingly,

'I am sorry I went, since you are vexed; but even now I do not, cannot, see that there was the slightest harm in going.'

'Well, and I tell you,' said Joe, with uncontrollable vehemence, 'that I won't have it, which is, or should be, enough. If you see no reason why you should not be seen alone in public places with a man who—'

Cressida laid her hand on his

beseechingly to stop him. Joe put it from him rather roughly, and turned away. Cressida sat looking wearily before her, somewhat stunned by the collision. Could it be this single incident, that she persisted in making out to herself to be trivial theoretically, that had metamorphosed him thus? She supposed so, for at the moment she was too bewildered to think. Her behaviour to-night had put him in a passion; to-morrow he would have come round, perhaps. But something would remain. That 'last' evening had left her feeling saddened, stranded, desolate.

CHAPTER XXIX.

NUIT BLANCHE.

JOE, to whom serious mental disturbance was a thing unknown, his ideas and faiths, ever since he had any, having kept the even tenor of their way without an overturn or the threat of it, had sustained a sort of moral dislocation, painful past all telling, warping and injurious besides.

It had thrown his whole honest, kindly nature off the line—as he was half aware. Thrust into changed conditions, with no true recognition of or faith in his surroundings, he went striking wildly about, with futile endeavours to regain his lost balance and bearings in a reversed and hostile world.

Had any one told him beforehand that he would have spoken and felt to Cressida as he had done that last night at Paris he would have told them they were off their heads, or that he must be, or ever such a thing could come to pass. And what a little incident had done it all—a key fallen in his way that gave sudden language and intelligence to a

cipher he had been looking at for some time.

The next day his impressions seemed to him to oscillate between two extremes. A revelation that threw a light on every thought and feeling—stunted hope and made game of recollection;—or, a blank. Either of two things must be; that Cressida had been tampering with his confidence, repaying his unexampled trust with doubleness of heart—or else he, Joe, was a jealous idiot.

But yesterday the latter supposition,—anything indeed,—would have seemed more admissible than the first. To-day he no longer knew what to believe; thought wrong, saw wrong, felt wrong, as human nature must, under undue mental pain. Only a superior sort of mental heroism could have saved him from acting wrong, and, now judgment was nowhere, held him on in straight steering by dint of preserving a true feeling. Joe's heroism was of a physical sort. Dangers and injuries to life and limb he could have met without flinching. But that fortitude of spirit that leaves a man some forbearance and some self-government, even under heavy pressure, was a thing to which he had no pretensions.

They left Paris the next day—but by no means the same gay party that had entered it. Joe was taciturn and constrained, short with every one, impracticable with Cressida. Elise de Saumarez for once had lost her good-humour conspicuously. She had taken an opportunity that morning of intimating to Cressida how thoroughly she disapproved of her last night's inconsiderate escapade. Cressida laughed haughtily, coldly, and remarked that her notions of social propriety appeared to have narrowed very suddenly. It was a thing, indeed, Elise would never

have thought twice about, but for the threatening unfavourable reaction on her own designs.

Alec was outwardly cool and alert as usual, though the rising in his mind was quite equal to that in Joe's. He was more accustomed to such changes and chances, though; perhaps never more himself than when under them.

Cressida, between the two, preserved her outward grace and dignity to admiration; only she felt that her manner was artificial, her speech not spontaneous. As the day wore on Joe's mind underwent a sort of reaction. Cressida bitterly resented his outburst of last night. He had been so beside himself at the moment that he only half remembered what he had said and done. Perhaps she was really not so much to blame for what had occurred. There was a bearable conclusion presented itself now and then—though even that could not be come to without a pang; he hated to have to lower his standard of her. She was high-spirited, fond of admiration and flattery, might forget to think for a moment, and take for a small matter that of which particular circumstances made a thing of moment. Alec de Saumarez was a dangerous sort of fellow, and by no means such a fool as—to Joe—he looked. What could Cressida know about such a man, and the degree to which marked attentions on his part might become compromising in people's eyes? A trifling affair that would be a feather in Alec's cap would be a blot on Cressida's scutcheon. O, to be able to go and say as much to her honestly and frankly. But he was met by checkmate at the outset, since, so much once granted, it gave substance to other shadows of back knowledge—threatening clouds of infinite distrust that

blurred everything. He meant to take his own way to satisfy his judgment; to manoeuvre, if need be.

Poor Joe—unused to intrigue, confronted by Alec's duplicity and Cressida's baffling reserve, and impatient to break through both—had best have let diplomacy alone. His chance was that of an Indian going out with his clumsy club and spear against a volley of modern artillery. Or rather it was the Indian put to fight with strange weapons, laying about him at random, wounding himself and his friends without demolishing his enemies.

No Machiavelli. His extreme touchiness and intractability to her spoke for itself. His ill-disguised animosity towards Alec frightened her, and seemed to make frankness on her part both as to past and present fatally impossible. Now, as to the future.

That Alec would communicate, or try to, she felt certain. She knew, too, that if he meant to do it without Joe's finding out, Joe would not find out. It seemed to be clearly her duty to stop this, if she could. But the straight course that would have been so unmistakable some weeks ago appears to have broken, and between the deviating branches she is puzzled which is the right one to take.

After all that had passed previously, how could she, even with Alec's last night's confession in her ears, make the final break so rude and sudden as plain sense seemed to demand? Had she not done her very best to drive things to this hazardous pitch? She would have liked now to lead him to some safe place—part from him there—not seem willing to precipitate him with one hand the better to shelter herself with the other. She had taken a double part on her, and felt as if she

must play it through. But what safe issue can be relied on when your very virtues turn against you, and rebel at a too summary recantation of foolishness without a thought or word for those you have tacitly agreed to entangle in folly? Move where you will, you put yourself in the wrong.

The weather had broken up, and they left the yacht at Folkestone, where the party separated, De Saumarez remaining on board, awaiting a favourable day to take round the *Banshee* to her winter quarters. Elise was to deposit Lady Molly in her country home, before proceeding to London, and Cressida and Joe went on their way to Seacombe; Cressida had ventured to express a wish to give up this part of their programme, and go home direct. But the single effect of the suggestion was to displease Joe. Everything she said or did was liable to make him angry now—and nothing more than an attempt at persuasion. He seemed for the present to prefer to ignore the necessity for giving his reasons for things. It was his wish to take her to Seacombe, and unto Seacombe they should go. It was only after they had started that he mentioned carelessly that his lawyer chanced to be down at Torquay; that they had business to transact that admitted of no delay—and could easily meet from Seacombe, distant only half an hour by rail.

Their old quarters were ready waiting for them; Mavis Lodge, with every chair in its old place; not a leaf altered in the evergreen gardens. It was another life they came to take up within those walls. True the surface was smoothed over, and broken only by slight passing ebullitions, but the concord was not spontaneous; the collisions were.

On the third day Joe announced his intention of going over to Torquay. To Cressida's questions as to the matter of business in hand requiring his attention, he replied rather briefly, intimating that he did not choose to enter into the particulars now, but that she would know in good time.

His imperative tone and strange manner she felt wounding in the extreme, and her irritation showed itself towards him by coldness and a sort of sensitive shrinking. When he was gone a forlorn feeling came over her—her influence had deserted her suddenly—she could not appease him, nor meet him, nor direct or control the course his thoughts were taking, nor save herself from these exasperating consequences.

Then with a half-sigh she took out Alec's letter, one he had contrived to send, but that she had not yet been able to read.

He wrote from on board the *Banshee*—to tell her a thing or two. She had no right to be surprised at the news, but it darkened her perplexity.

The affair with Lady Molly definitely broken off. Elise indignant, but forced to concur. For the girl had gone home mortally set against her ex-lover, who, for his part, had long ceased to care for her favour especially. He was remaining with the yacht, that by this time must be at Torquay; and a few days hence he proposed to run it into Seacombe, where it generally wintered.

This was the sum and substance of his communication. Its very brevity disturbed her. If he had written at greater length and with less reticence she would have known better what to do.

Joe returned in the evening, tired and grave. He was uncommonly silent during dinner, but Cressida felt that some cloud

was impending. In the course of the evening, lifting his eyes from the newspaper he was not reading, he said, with a studied negligence that made the constraint more apparent,

'They say that that affair between De Saumarez and Lady Molly Carroll has suddenly been broken off.'

'Is it?' said Cressida impassively.

'You knew of it, did you?' said Joe, with rising harshness in his voice.

Cressida hesitated a moment, and then replied,

'I had thought for some time that nothing would ever come of it, myself.'

'He took you into his confidence, then,' said Joe, with a forced laugh, 'told you he meant to slink out of it.'

'I felt sure, from what he said, that it must end so,' she replied.

'Did you know also that he was at Torquay, and coming to Seacombe?'

'The yacht always winters here, I believe,' she returned listlessly.

Joe sighed. It was clear she was determined to say nothing, would not or could not go to meet him.

The next day they were out walking, and encountered Alec together with a knot of yachting friends on the little quay. A short parley was unavoidable. He mentioned that he was at the Royal Hotel for a few days, seeing to the repairs of his yacht, and let drop some conventional phrases about coming to call. If it was a feeler he put out, the manner in which it was received was sufficiently conclusive. Joe was a bad dissembler—even where the usages of society compelled him to hold in his speech.

'I won't have him here,' he

said, when they were out of hearing. 'Do you understand, Cressida?'

'I should think that *he* did,' she replied, with spirit, 'and that is enough. You don't seem to care what you do.'

'To him? Why should I?' Joe laughed. 'One doesn't stand on ceremony with low curs of that sort.'

Cressida flushed crimson, but remained resolutely silent. She foresaw that Alec, understanding, would less than ever leave without another word.

It came to her the next day. He meant to see her, he said; he must—and alone. He should just wait for the possibility, and take the first that offered. She was not to write; but might count on his coming as he had said.

Cressida was roused at last. This time she must stop him from keeping his word. Not for her own part. Her spirit rose up proudly and said, 'Let him come then. I too have something to say. What I write he might perhaps not believe; but he will believe me. And if I might make him understand better,—so that he may not go away hating me,—I might undo some of this harm yet.'

But a stronger impulse said, 'Your first consideration here is another. You may justify yourself to yourself. How will you to him? Is the moment one for you to demand scrupulous fairness, much less patience and implicit confidence? At a terrible cost to him will you go another step towards complicating a web already past your skill to disentangle?'

Joe was out. Cressida retreated to her own room and sat down to write her answer. The task was hard. She wanted to destroy their false relation and yet to seem consistent; to be upright with him and yet let him feel her indiffer-

ence. In plain words she wanted not to destroy his love and yet refuse ever to hear more of it. That could not be. So after repeated trials she forced herself to disregard this lingering half-selfish compunction—to think only of writing what would prevent him from ever caring to seek her presence again.

Absorbed in her occupation she had let time slip by unheeded, and Joe, who had returned from his walk, came into the room rather brusquely just as she had finished. Cressida gave a nervous start, but did not look up.

'To whom are you writing?' he asked directly.

She looked at him, amazed, in spite of all that had gone before. Without heeding her reproachful glance, he repeated his question in a tone so overbearing that a spirit of insurrection bore down everything else in her. She met his eyes fearlessly, and replied,

'To Mr. de Saumarez.'

'I'll not have you write letters to him,' said Joe flatly.

Cressida rose with an air of impatience, and walked to the window with her note in her hand.

'You won't let him come here,' she said; 'well, I've something I wish to say to him. What am I to do?'

'I can think of nothing you can possibly have to say to him that wouldn't be better left unsaid,' returned Joe, commanding himself but indifferently, 'and I'm well aware what I'm about when I forbid you to have communications with him of any sort.'

'What do you mean?' she said coldly.

'I mean that he's a damned scoundrel,' said Joe violently. 'I know it now. And if you won't look to your good name in this matter,—I must.'

Cressida trembled from head to foot with wild indignation and excitement. No explanation could avert the battle now. Each was in arms against the other, bitterly incensed, and each would only forgive or be reconciled on condition of remaining master of the field.

She smiled, but her lip quivered a little as she said protestingly,

'But if I tell you it is important this letter should go,—that it is a letter I ought to send,—if I give you my word that—'

Joe cut her short, saying abruptly,

'Well then, let me see it.' A fair test to propose, he thought, and he added, 'Perhaps I'm the best judge of what it's fitting you should send.'

Cressida looked from her letter to his face disturbed by passion and harshness. She had written, unfeignedly, and firmly. A lenient judge or shrewd, impartial umpire might have seen in her letter her exoneration at least, and let the thunderbolts fall on Alec alone. Yet there was no telling what effect altogether it might produce on Joe in his present mood. In justice to him, to herself, to Alec, he had better not read it now.

'You don't trust me, this time,' she said.

Joe looked at her without speaking, and there was a moment's agonising hesitation.

'You don't believe my word,' she resumed, with vehemence, 'or else—or else you think I don't know what I ought, or ought not, to write?'

Still Joe said nothing.

Enough. Cressida crossed the room leisurely, put the note into the fire, then turned to him, pale, and with a singular expression,—so singular that it staggered him a little,—saying,

'As you please.'

The stone was set rolling. Let who can stop it now. It was not for Joe, in a tumult of bitter jealousy, resentment, and tortured affection; nor yet for Cressida, half-maddened by the treatment she had provoked, and bewildered by the sense, now fully realised, that she had walked into a treacherous pass from which she could hardly hope to thread her way so as to emerge *tête haute*, with flying colours without and peace within; forgetting herself too under the stress of this mortifying distrust and restless self-assertion of the arbitrary power of masculine will,—no appeal allowed. Something that whilst so easily enforcing instant compliance, put a good understanding more and more out of the question every hour; poor Joe blindly falling back on a line that would once have revolted him; setting to work to destroy his own dominion by perpetual emphasising it in outward visible ways. Let him make the most of what such a method can bring him: the outward and visible passive submission of a statue. Cressida is his. Yet two destinies had been in *her* hand, and she has done with them what she listed. But all power has a term, and of what shall come of her list to either of those destinies she is now no longer dictatress.

A day or two later some young yachtsmen they met in the town chanced to mention that Alec de Saumarez had left Seacombe. Somebody had been to call upon him at the hotel, and found he had gone off already,—started for London last night. Cressida heard it gladly at the moment, but second thoughts checked and perplexed her. It was much too good to be true.

The next morning Joe suddenly announced that he was going

over to Torquay. A friend had offered to take him in his steamer, and he should go. It was blowing a fresh breeze, an extra inducement, and they must start early. He hoped to be back to dinner at eight.

Cressida listened passively. An idea, a conjecture, entered her mind; an unpleasant surmise. She put it away. It might not be.

Joe that morning was troubled by a remote sense of compunction. Had he been a little too hard on her the other day? had he seemed too brutally suspicious and unreasonable? He had half a mind to say something to that effect,—some words, at least, more conciliatory than she had heard lately,—before he left. But he was in a hurry, the launch was waiting—he would put off talking, he decided, till he came back to-night.

At the moment when he wanted to wish her good-bye she was engaged with the landlady, and he went off without seeing her.

The morning was soon over. It was rough weather out at sea, and Joe's return could not be looked for before the appointed time. What should she do with those few hours? Stay at home and risk a possible conjuncture threatening her. She had it in her power to thwart it in various ways. There was Fan, whom she had never been to visit, but whom she knew to be expecting some sign from her, and whom, but for the civil war pre-occupying her, she would have sought out before. There were Seacombe acquaintances who would be glad to see her. But it was a wild afternoon, and she decided on remaining indoors. Was it not after all a most improbable apprehension of hers? Be that as it may, and in spite of Alec's alleged departure, she could not forget the word he had given.

VOL. XXXIV. NO. CCLIII.

The restless feeling, half-doubt, half-dread, forbade her to settle herself to read or work all day. It grew worse as the afternoon wore on. She sat by the bay-window commanding the full view of the harbour below. She could see the boats creeping about, and the mast-heads of the yachts lying at anchor, the *Banshee* among the rest.

The sky took strange colours at sunset, then became thickly overcast, and darkness followed rapidly, with rain and squalls of wind. Cressida still sat mechanically watching the twinkling lights on the water. It wanted four hours still to Joe's return.

Presently she noticed a small boat creeping across the harbour. What made her eye single it out at first she could not tell. There were at least a dozen moving to and fro. As she followed the light it seemed to be making direct for the landing underneath the slope below Mavis Lodge. She watched it uneasily till it was hidden by the projecting hill-side.

Then her ear seemed quickened suddenly. She felt she was listening for something—a footstep, was it? Perhaps it was fear that made her presently fancy she had caught the sound. The wind blew so that she could be certain of nothing, but between the gusts she thought she could distinguish a distant tread on the gravel; some one mounting the steep zig-zags that led up to this, the garden side, of the house. Nearer and nearer. No doubt of it now.

She strained her eyes into the darkness, but could see nothing. Another lull, and she heard the footsteps quite close. For a moment she was seized with paralyzing fear; then an immense hope rushed upon her. It was perhaps Joe. The rain and boisterous wea-

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ther—for the harbour was sheltered, and the wind might be harder out at sea—had detained the steamer or determined him on returning by train. She did not know but what there was one that might bring him now.

She listened again. The step had ceased, but she thought she saw a figure move between the black holly-bushes exactly opposite. She could bear the doubt no longer, flung up the window, from which a little flight of stone steps led on to the turf beneath—and pressed forwards to make sure. The figure stood out from the trees, the light from inside the room streamed full on his face. Joe? No, Alec.

The moment she knew it something seemed to die in her. Fears and tremors were extinguished too, however. She stood there to meet him with an unnatural composure in which he could read nothing but desperation and soul-abandonment. He stopped an instant to reconnoitre—saw that she was by herself as he had supposed.

‘Well,’ he said, with a ring of exultation in his tone, and following fast upon her as she stepped back into the room, ‘did not I tell you I should find a way? Is it well done or no?’

‘How did you know I should be alone this afternoon?’ said Cressida promptly.

‘I saw the steamer leave the harbour—for Torquay, I was told,’ he replied significantly.

‘Where were you? I heard you had gone.’

‘On board the *Banshee*. At the inn they believe I’ve left. I managed that very easily. Only my yachtsmen know I’m here today. But I could watch this window from the deck-cabin, with the glass—saw you sitting here, and waited till it was late enough,

and wet enough, and rough enough, and I felt pretty sure you would have no other visitor. Then I came.’

‘It was a wild idea of yours,’ said Cressida uneasily. ‘You might have been met—recognised. If so, your coming in this strange half-secret way will be the worst of all.’

‘Did you think I should go without seeing you?’ he asked incredulously.

‘They said you were gone,’ she replied. ‘From that I hoped you had given up all idea of it. It was reckless of you to try.’

‘I know, I know,’ he said impatiently; ‘but who cares for that now, since I have succeeded at last, as I said I would? Wasn’t it well done?’

His eye was wild and eager, his colour changed rapidly, there was a novel animation about his manner, a frank, determined, fearless spirit that redeemed him from scorn just then and raised in her a darker self-reproach. This man, desertless, irreclaimable though he might be, had a soul—and it seemed to her as if it might rise up in judgment on hers now, and condemn it.

She felt no fear of him, no more than of herself. For their two sakes it was best that he should see her this once more.

‘Sit down,’ she said, rather faintly, ‘since you have come. I thought it just possible, but trusted you would not risk it.’

He dashed down his cap—laughed to find his hair all wet with the rain.

‘As to being seen,’ he said, ‘that would be difficult; it’s dark as pitch out there on the water. But had I come through the town the chances are some one would have recognised me. Besides, as to preferring your garden way, and coming on you unannounced, I’ve





'She could bear the doubt no longer, flung up the window, &c.

200 p. 74

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no choice but to take the law into my own hands. Your house is forbidden me—and if I'm to see you I must manage it so that no one but yourself shall be the wiser.'

'You know the difficulties in the way of meeting now,' she began hesitatingly; 'it is not in my power to alter that.'

Alec nodded. 'Difficulties? you mean impossibilities. I've proof enough—fresh proof to-day if it was wanted.'

'What can you mean?' she asked anxiously.

'This,' he said, 'it's a trifle—but speaks volumes, I think. It was a money affair, a matter of a loan—an arrangement I entered into last winter, and of which, perhaps, you never heard—'

'Yes, yes,' she said impatiently; 'go on.'

'Well, it has been cancelled suddenly, paid off. The whole sum passed into my lawyer's hands yesterday.'

Cressida's countenance changed. Once again the perception was forced on her of what a thin partition there was, and there long had been, between her and the gaping sea.

She wondered now that she had not thought more of this—a matter that, for her, had faded into remote insignificance, but that must these last few days have rankled like poison in Joe's mind. How scantily she had taken into account the disturbance and suffering she was putting him through. Alec saw on her face that she was deeply troubled—but it raised no misgivings of the right kind.

'So you see there was really nothing for it,' he continued presently, 'but to do as I've done, come to you by sea as I mayn't by land, and go scaling the slopes of your garden in this knight-errant sort of fashion. Why, if

others had their way, to tyrannise as they chose, we should have been separated for ever, before we knew.'

'There is no other way,' said Cressida in a low, steady voice. Her eyes fell; she bent down her head, and he could not see her face.

'You say so, but can you believe it really?' continued Alec rapidly. 'Anything, I grant you, is better than to be spied upon, dogged, baffled, and cheated out of exchanging a word. But there might be better for both of us than you or I have found yet; I know it; ah, and so do you,' he urged, with the gaining earnestness of a passionate feeling he no longer exerted himself to conceal. Repression would not serve him now; but daring fervour has been known to sweep away scruples of all sorts before it.

Alec was not a fiend. His villany was on the whole of a spontaneous, commonplace order. If there was an element of calculation underlying his stormiest proceedings he was apt to forget it in the action. His mind now was full of the idea that he had come to compass Cressida's happiness, not her misery. If things stood so that she could only achieve her escape from an irksome lot by absolute renunciation of every other tie she had ever formed, why not urge her on to this? What pleasure could there be in her life now, exposed to the rudeness—brutality in Alec's idea—of one at the best ridiculously incapable of comprehending her delicate nature and ministering to her subtler feelings?

That Cressida, in her right mind, should consent to take this course, as the one most alluring to herself, was not absolutely inconceivable from Alec's point of view—there was now the infatuation

of the moment to help to carry her away into giving her consent blindfold to any desperate scheme he should propose. She would act in haste, place her future in his hands. It would be his part not to let her repent after, and that he vowed never to do.

For the real tie that bound Cressida to Joe,—the tie of clinging affection, born out of gratitude, generous sympathies, mutual associations, interests, and obligations, the bond of lives and hopes united, the thousand fine threads that make a cord of all cords the worst to be broken,—it did not enter into his comprehension. Cressida herself had hardly been conscious of its full strength till now, when, as Alec went on talking, and her imagination was dragged along to keep pace with his, it all served but to bring home to her more vividly how to snap that cord would be as easy and pleasant as to tear up her own life at the roots.

'Should we mind anything, then?' he was saying. 'Should we care for the good words or opinion of outsiders? Let people say their worst, they could not part us. We have waited long enough already. Why did we ever let the world come between us? Cressida, I think we were just mad in those days—'

'Don't talk of them,' she interrupted.

'True, they are over, but we—aren't we here, and the same? Haven't we our youth to spend? If we lost our way once we can make up for it yet. You doubted me still the other day, I saw, but I've broken away from everything that hampered me—freely—for I never asked for a word from you then.'

He was asking it now; claiming it too. He stood up and leaned back against the marble fireplace facing her in silence.

As usual under the pressure of mental excitement, the vivid, irresistible, expressive soul-beauty of Cressida's countenance was heightened to the utmost. Such a face as has done strange work in men's minds again and again, mastered the fear of death, the love of fortune, the superstitions of honour. As Alec stood looking at her now, all the scattered, squandered, rusted, worn forces of his being seemed to be reawakening, gathering, and concentrating themselves on this one last, best enterprise of genuine passion, against which all else seemed mere chaff.

Cressida was speechless. Words, plenty of them, rushed to her lips, but hard reason drove them back. Talk to such a man of social laws he has never owned or obeyed; of divine ordinances in which he does not believe; of compunction, truth, generosity, rectitude, when he has long quenched their light within him; of 'others' when he knows only of a self to serve.

Mockery. Worse. To him, and from her, hypocrisy. He has never made any pretence of goodness—never appealed to her sympathy on that score. How can she affect ignorance, and appeal to a dead virtue in him whom she has well known all along what he is, and also, what he is not?

She must be sorry for him in this moment. She has done him wrong. Nothing can alter that. Her look was sad and remorseful, but there was none of the tenderness in it that he sought, as she replied with a fixed calmness that took him utterly aback,

'Alec, I let you come to-day, but it was the better to make an end. You know you've made open friendship impossible. From that moment it was impossible you and I should ever have anything more to do with one another.'

'Who says so?' he exclaimed impetuously. 'A world you don't care for, any more than myself—and that we aren't bound to obey—or to reckon with. Who says so? Not I.'

'I do,' said Cressida, in the same tone. 'And—' she added distantly, with penetrating accent and significance, 'never could we have been everything to each other.'

Her tone, more than her words, brought Alec to himself, struck him with doubt and mistrust. He felt his moorings giving way.

Cressida, overcome by a burning sense of shame, sought in vain for the proud words she wanted. But she was master of her tone and let that speak.

'You have misunderstood me terribly,' she continued, 'if you ever thought—'

'*Ever thought,*' repeated Alec, with a ring of irony that struck sharply on her ears, 'thought, Cressida?'

'That your love could ever make me so utterly false and treacherous, and forgetful as to—accept it,' she pursued unfalteringly.

'Are you telling me this in earnest?' he said agitatedly, and coming nearer to her. 'No no—I understand—you—you haven't the courage to defy—public opinion—and the contempt of fools, loss of what they call position—and you give the other reason. But the happier the position, the higher the position in reality—and if that's what you are afraid of, I—'

'I meant what I said,' she interrupted, growing colder and more distant under his searching gaze. 'It is the absolute truth. If I've led you to think otherwise—as I see I have—I am sorry—but I've paid for it now, dearly,' she added with a flash of vehemence, 'in having had to sit and listen pa-

tiently and hear all this from you.'

'Having to listen—having to hear?' repeated Alec, stupefied. 'Impossible—what is it that you're saying to me? Women are false I know, but not so false as that. Eyes tell lies for once, but not over and over again. Men deceive sometimes, but not in that cold fashion. At least there's something in them—in me—that's not hard and hollow and insincere—' he stopped, recovered himself with an effort. Cressida drooped her head and let fall something inaudible—he caught the word 'Un-generous.'

'At least,' he concluded incisively, 'when men make love, they mean it.'

'Say what you like,' said Cressida proudly, 'for it seems I've given you the right—a right you mean to make use of—to heap all these bitter taunts upon me for what indeed was not meant in injury—' a sob she could not check broke through her voice and stifled it.

'No no, forgive me,' he exclaimed, repentant. 'I—I forgot myself just now—but you don't know, don't care what you are doing to me.'

The agitation that betrayed itself in his face, voice, frame, in spite of his attempts to disguise it, touched her. She knew his love's worth exactly—and that it was small. Shallow, short-lived, and so far fallacious; yet so far true that just then, if she had stood on one side and all the kingdoms of the earth on the other, he would have followed her, without looking back.

'I have been fearfully wrong,' she said slowly, 'and deserve to suffer, as something tells me I shall, more than you. One day you will forgive me, Alec, sooner than I shall forgive myself. You

know everything now, and how your being here at this moment pains me as the worst conviction of my wild selfishness. After this we can never meet again with my free will—and if,' she urged intently, 'in all this love of yours there has been from first to last one spark of generous feeling, you will leave this place to-night, and leave me now.'

Alec looked at her in silence—tossed about with clashing emotions—hardly accountable for his words, to say the least. He understood now how men had murdered women they were fond of. He could have knelt to her on one impulse and strangled her upon another. Bitterness was uppermost and the leaving speech that hung on his lips was little fond. Yet the resolute calm of her manner was gaining on him, by degrees—these wild feelings abated, leaving him inert, bewildered, and pliant.

She had conquered. He must leave her for this time, for always if need be. She could make him.

She rose. Alec mechanically laid his hand on his cap, and she went a few steps towards the window and stood silently, but with grave entreaty in her countenance urging him not to linger. How the wind was blowing outside—sweeping through the half-raised window. Alec, as he passed, without looking at her, wrung her hand—cold and dead in his grasp—and was going to obey, when a startled exclamation from Cressida arrested him; he stood still to listen.

Between the gusts of wind a heavy tread was distinctly heard on the soaked gravel, mounting the terraces.

'Kennedy. Curse him,' muttered Alec to himself. His first impulse was to turn back, to pass through into the hall and let him-

self out of the house by the front entrance into the road—the work of a moment—and thus avoid a meeting. He made a hasty instinctive movement towards the drawing-room door. Cressida stopped him.

'Are you mad?' she exclaimed. 'If I haven't prevented your coming, at least you shall not leave now in that underhand way.' Alec hesitated; recollecting, however, what Cressida had forgotten: that his boat might have already been noticed at the landing. 'Do you suppose I want to keep from him that you've been here?' she continued, with animation. 'I am not afraid—so you need not be, I think.'

'O, very well,' said Alec impassively. He stood still where he was, with his head just turned towards the window; and both remained in the same frozen attitude of petrified expectation, neither with any clear idea of what there was to dread.

Joe, as he crossed the bit of level lawn under the drawing-room windows, had indistinctly seen the two figures inside. A puzzling impression seized him, and in his uncontrollable impatience to satisfy himself he was wrong, he stopped short, and instead of going round to the garden-door mounted the window-stairs, lifted the sash from outside and stepped in.

A feeling without a name in the language of the passions seemed to leap upon him and choke him. A rush of savage indignation flung back upon himself by the flat impossibility of giving it due vent. For a moment he lost head, made a hasty step towards Alec with a menace in countenance and movement. The look that met him was perfectly unmoved; the handsome face stamped with that cool, audacious *insouciance* which Joe had lately come to loathe.

Their eyes met on a level, for the two men were of a height, only measured against his antagonist Alec was a mere rush, for shape and strength. Splendid satisfaction for the other; to feel that if he had anything against this man he could have knocked the life out of him in a minute! Fine medicine for his own hurt, appeasing his soul with a burst of blind passion, like an exasperated animal spending its rage on the cloak of the hunter that has given him the slip. Such a triumph as devils may look on and laugh at—since both victories—of wrong and revenge—will redound to their honour and glory.

A dull blind sense of it all rushed on Joe, as, confronting Alec, he felt stunned the first instant by a sudden accursed intelligence of a mocking power there he could no more slay than he could get it for himself.

It gave Cressida a moment. She saw how vast was this least of two evils she had accepted, the sudden provocation that had made a madman of him, but she divined some remnant of her old influence might yet survive.

'Joe,' she interposed promptly, 'Mr. de Saumarez is leaving Seacombe to-night. He wished to see me first, and came this afternoon. And now,' she continued, raising her expressionless eyes to Alec's face, 'you should be going, I think, or you may be too late.'

The effort of will, to hold her ground steadily, cut short the scene quietly, restrain Joe from saying a word till they were alone, through the successful insistence of a calm mind striving to keep the storm in another in check, seemed to tax every nerve in her; her eyes swam, she lost her breath, and was sensible of nothing except that Joe, yielding unconsciously to the sway of her voice,

had not opened his lips the while, that what she dreaded had been averted, and Alec was gone.

Joe had recovered his senses, and stood looking at his wife.

'Well acted,' he said coolly, and still staring her blankly in the face. 'Upon my word, Cressida, I—' he stopped and broke off into a half-convulsive, unnatural laugh.

Now let Cressida, who has let loose the winds, preach moderation and justice and patience and fair play. She felt her impotence, and only looked at him beseechingly.

'Stop,' he said, with a sudden change of countenance, putting his hand on her wrist, and drawing her nearer to him that he might read her face. 'Did you expect—did you know he might come this afternoon?'

'O, I knew that,' said Cressida, with a lurking flash of defiance she repented. Less and less could she hope to be heard now.

Joe dropped her hand suddenly; his hold was rougher than in his excitement he knew.

'You hurt me,' she said.

'Hurt you,' he repeated, laughing, with that wild inexpressible contempt those rouse in us who, feminine wise, cry out for a scratched finger, *their* grievance, when they have wounded our soul past surgery. 'Like you—to talk of hurting. You want that right all to yourself, I think.'

She said nothing—waited. Self-command of a sort was returning to him by degrees. He flung himself into a chair—away from her.

'I'm glad you came,' she said, still a little breathless, 'I may tell you now that my letter—the letter you forbade me to send, was written to forbid him to come. Had you trusted me then, you and I would have been spared this, and I should have been spared seeing him any more, as I desired.'

'You're an admirable actress,' he replied tauntingly, 'but what's the good of it here—now?'

'I think you're unfair,' said Cressida impetuously. 'I wished to do this right thing and you would not believe me.'

'O, I know,' said he vacantly, sinking his head in his hands, 'I have it all. I tyrannise, I'm arbitrary, hard, and so on. You said to yourself you would see him in spite of me. Have your way; and I—I'm an idiot because I want to cross it, and because I speak out to you, now I know exactly how faithful your heart can be.'

'I don't know what you have to make you so bitter against me except that I let him see me to-day against your will. It may have been wrong, but God knows I'm glad I did, if it has made an end.'

'You don't know?' he repeated, starting up, not heeding her last words. 'You mean you think I don't know that you were never frank with me on that point, Cressida, not from the beginning; you chose to keep from me that there ever had been anything between you. You never said a word, not when I began those dealings with him; you let me take his money, left me to learn what I ought to have heard long ago from you, from the written slanders of some low villain, who thought he'd pay off his grudge to me that way.'

'What?' she said sharply.

'O, they wrote lies, I daresay,' he continued, more calmly. 'I could not think why they should sting; there was a bit of truth that did that—enough for me.'

Cressida shivered. O, that miserable weakness, truckling ambition, fatal habit of half-conscious self-deception, reasoning herself into self-indulgence and time-serving!

'Whatever you heard,' she said firmly—'and I don't deny that I was quite wrong not to be perfectly open about it with you, as I might—there could be no truth there that could make you feel towards me as you are feeling now.'

'What?' said Joe, with a fierce scorn breaking out again, 'not enough? What do you suppose I wanted of you? I was simpleton enough to believe you had a grain of truth in your heart. A look at the past should have taught me better. You cheated Norbert Alleyne. People were right in what they said of you then—that the man who could trust anything to you and your seeming was a fool, who deserved no better than he would get.'

'Joe, what is the matter?' she cried painfully. 'Do you know what you are saying to me?'

He was strangely roused indeed, by such an excessive violence of emotion as had never visited him yet, and came out with the strong crushing words that rushed straight from his heart to his lips.

'No, you're right,' he muttered gloomily. 'I've forgotten myself, so far as to speak the truth to you nobody ever spoke before.'

He remained looking vacantly before him. His head throbbed; he could not think—his sensations had all run wild; he was conscious only of a restless longing to escape into the open air; he felt he should be stifled if he remained any longer in that room. The impulse took possession of him. He got up, seized his cap, and flung out of the room—out of the house.

Cressida went and stood before the fireplace. That sweet face of hers she had loved so well met her in the glass above. It seemed to echo back Joe's last words.

All true. Norbert, Joe, Alec—here was she, branded by each of them, severally, as worse than their enemy, their false friend. Misery. How had it all come about?

The reaction left her entirely exhausted. She sat down to rest, and remained for some hours, careless, almost unconscious, in her overwhelming lassitude, of the lapse of time. Then she tried to rouse herself. All indoors was quiet, but outside the storm ran high. The servants came in for orders; she answered mechanically, putting them off till Mr. Kennedy came in. She was recovering now, and impatiently waiting, listening for Joe's return. The gale had risen considerably in the last two hours, and on her quickened nerves the sounds of disturbed nature told with the strange power they take sometimes. The moaning, sighing wind that shook the house in sudden squalls now and then, the dull roar of the sea in the distance,—all combined to intensify the arch foreboding and shapeless fears within her.

It was late now. She suddenly realised it—ten o'clock—and a kind of panic dread seized her. She dared not go out, yet to remain thus helpless and inactive at home was terrible. The sound of a ring—not Joe's—made her start violently. She heard a woman's voice in the hall. Who in the world would come to her at this hour? She rushed out to see.

'Fan!' she exclaimed. For a moment, as they looked into each other's eyes, they forgot they had not parted yesterday.

Cressida drew her visitor after her into the drawing-room, and shut the door quickly.

'If you could tell,' began Cressida, rather wildly, 'how thankful

I am you have come. But what sent you?'

'I had been down with Norbert to the bay below the cliff to see the storm. We were going back, and met Mr. Kennedy.'

'Well?' said Cressida eagerly.

'We stopped to speak to him. Cressida, I don't know how or why—I felt I must come to you at once. Norbert has gone home. Do you want me?'

'Do I?' said Cressida in a choked voice, burying her face on Fan's shoulder. 'O Fan, is there not a world somewhere where we could hide—you and I—where no one could come to vex us? Only women are kind and forgiving.'

She raised her head, and told the facts briefly, but without reservation.

'I will stay with you till he comes back,' was all Fan could say now; and there they sat waiting, Cressida's fevering anxiety growing apace.

'What was that?' she asked sharply, as by and by a booming sound caught their ears, distinct amid the roar of wind and sea.

'There's a ship in distress, I'm afraid. We heard as we came back. It drove past the harbour—couldn't get in, and ran on the rocks out beyond the bay. There was a crowd on the look-out, and making their way to the shore; but the sea was too heavy, they said, to launch a boat.'

'Fan, let us go down there at once,' said Cressida impetuously; 'I don't care for anything—Joe will be there, I know he will. I cannot sit here any longer, or I shall go mad.'

'Well—' said Fan. 'But if he should come home?'

'You don't know him,' said Cressida; 'if those men are in danger, Joe will be on the spot, to lend help if it is wanted, and—'

she stopped short—a sudden expression of nameless anxiety crossed her face.

‘He wouldn’t go and risk any great danger, surely?’ asked Fan urgently—‘not expose himself rashly, I mean. For your sake he never would—it would be wrong.’

‘I cannot tell,’ she said confusedly; ‘he might not care to-night what he did, for he would not think of me. O, let us go!’

They started to walk down to the sea. The rain had ceased, but the wind, as they neared the cliff, beat in their faces boisterously. Fan wondered to see Cressida, accounted so delicate and easily tired, tread her way along, seeming not to be conscious of discomfort or exertion. O, to get down to the beach! They were coming near at last, breathless. Many were hastening along in the same direction, and a large crowd of fishermen, pilots, and others were gathered below; it was difficult to distinguish faces or make out what was going on, but Cressida fancied she had caught sight of Joe moving about in the very centre of the group.

For an hour those watchers had been waiting for the sea to moderate sufficiently to enable them to get the boat off. They had hoped that the vessel would hold out till help could be sent. It seemed now as if that would not be. The signals were urgent. She was very much damaged, and lying there beaten about by the waves might go to pieces any moment. The sailors were talking of manning the boat at once, and trying to launch it at all hazards.

The new-comers tried to approach, but were thrust back, and unable to get beyond the edge of the throng. To Cressida the scene was all wild, chaotic noise and bustle. The shouts and cries of

the crowd seemed to have no method in them; the surging mass of water made her giddy to look at, and her unpractised eyes could barely distinguish the wretched brig, labouring on the rocks, with tons of water breaking over her, and the crew clinging to the rigging.

The sea had very slightly moderated, however; some thought they might get the boat off, and that there was just a chance for her. So far as the ship’s crew were concerned, no further delay was possible.

Joe was in the thick of the crowd. Cressida and Fan could come nowhere near him, but could see him now and then as the lanterns flashed on his figure—taller than most of the men about him—lending a hand here and there with the preparations, ropes, buoys—active, eager, stirred to double energy in the exciting suspense as to whether the seamen out there would be saved or not. Despairing of getting nearer to the front, Cressida must snatch from the utterances of the bystanders what intelligence she could of what was going on.

They were hauling down the boat now. Several had offered to go with it. All these volunteers seemed well known. One or two were held back—they were willing to venture themselves, but had wives and children dependent on them, or parents to support; their place was taken by others, mostly younger fellows, with fewer ties or none. The crowd name them one by one as they get in—and now who is that just about to enter with the rest, the only stranger among them all?

Joe. He has forgotten everything in the fascination of danger and action. His eye is quick, his hand steady, his head cool; he is giving orders and executing them.

‘He is not going—he *must* not

go,' cried Cressida vehemently, with a last frantic effort to get near him. Her voice was lost in the hubbub, and she and her companion were helpless to part the barricade.

Then she heard a voice—it was the old harbour-master who was superintending the proceedings. He put his hand on Joe's arm, did not recognise him or distinguish him in his rough seafaring garments from the sailors around, and said doubtfully,

'Those first who have no wife or child at home—no one belonging to them.'

'Back, you fool!' Cressida heard Joe's voice with a ring in it that was for her alone—'I have none—there's no one belonging to me, I tell you!'

It had thrown her into a half-stupor. Automatically she heard the people around her saying that the boat was manned and they were getting it off now.

The launching, to all but sailors, seemed impracticable. To Cressida it looked like going to certain death. Fan kept whispering to her that the sea had gone down a little. Everybody was praising the noble fellows who had risked themselves so willingly, and now a cheer rose from the crowd—they were off—there was the little craft on the crest of a wave. Cressida must watch its course.

It had a tough struggle with the tide but seemed to be making headway. Joe was conspicuous among the sailors, doing the work of two. Danger had an intoxication for him, and, straining there at his oar, he existed neither for past nor future, never looked back, was conscious of nothing but that those fellows out there had been hanging for hours between life and death, and might perhaps be saved.

Soon Cressida could see no more

of the boat, but there were seamen around with spy-glasses who reported its progress. Presently a cheer from the shore announced that they were nearing the brig—had succeeded in throwing a line. They were getting the men off.

The next announcement was that the seas were breaking heavily over both crews. The position of the rescuers was becoming more perilous every minute—but three of the men belonging to the vessel were still on the deck. The deliverers stood out manfully. To steer off and leave those wretches to drown, with life almost within grasp, was what nobody thought of doing.

That was a critical moment. Now the waves threatened to swamp the fishermen's boat; it battled still. Another effort, and the last stragglers were got in. Another cheer came from the shore but died suddenly away.

A heavy surge has swept over the boat and carried off two of the sailors who were helping the refugees to clamber over the side.

For Cressida heaven and earth were eclipsed—the sun turned into darkness, the moon into blood. She did not faint nor sink, but neither lived she in those few instants. It was Fan's voice in her ear, tremulous but cheering, telling her that the two men had been recovered, that the boat was making its way back, which awoke her to life and to the sense of a single fear usurping all else in her.

The struggle with the waves had recommenced—severe, protracted, terrible, exciting to witness—the landing fraught with the utmost danger. But the boat was brought to shore in safety at last, the crowd pressing round eagerly on all sides as it was hauled up the beach. This time Cressida thinks she *will* break through that wall of flesh and blood. The ranks

have parted a little and she succeeds in pushing forwards to the edge of the front group standing round the boat, now landed high and dry on the beach. But here she was stopped. They thronged back. One of the sailors was trying to keep a clear space.

‘Out of the way there,’ he said.

‘What is it?’ asked Fan sharply.

‘They’re bringing ashore the two poor fellows who got struck overboard—Bob the pilot—and the stranger gentleman. There’s some one seeing to them. Stand back I say.’

But the two women have forced their way to the centre, where an old weather-beaten sailor, well used to such scenes and casualties, is occupied with Bob, who is beginning to recover. He will be all right, the tar thinks. As for the other, he doesn’t know. Seems badly hurt. The seaman shook his head. The boatmen say he was flung against the ship’s iron and—

He stopped. A glance at Cressida’s face made him somehow repent he had spoken. They talked hope to her now.

(*To be continued.*)

A PILGRIMAGE IN THE PEAK.

PROLOGUE.

WE call him 'Kalmat,' after the hero of Joseph Hatton's *Clytie*. He is so broad-chested, bronzed, bearded, and boyish. He broke in upon me in the busy Midland town, where I, a descendant of the Danaïdes, am doomed day by day to empty an inkpot whose ink never diminishes. He was 'passing through,' he said, and came to 'look me up.' A wanderer upon the face of the earth is 'Kalmat.' Like Dr. Syntax, he is ever travelling in search of the picturesque. He has employed most of the Swiss guides; he knows Norway better, perhaps, than some cockneys know London; he has penetrated into Japan; he has communed with Nature in the far-away fastnesses of the Sacramento. He lighted a cabaña, and began to talk about his next trip.

'Have you ever done Derbyshire? I asked.

He owned, after some hesitation, that he had once been to Buxton, and that he was at one time the owner of a spar ornament which was inscribed, 'A Present from Matlock.' These two facts comprehended all 'Kalmat's' knowledge of 'the English Switzerland.' He had seen acres of art at Antwerp, Rome, and Versailles, but somehow the princely galleries of Chatsworth had escaped his notice. He had been packed with perspiring tourists on full-flavoured steamboats to behold ruins on the Rhine; but the olden glories of Haddon Hall, Hardwick

House, and Wingfield Manor were unknown to him. He had climbed the Matterhorn and Mont Blanc, and could chat glibly about the giant Jungfrau and the terrific Schreckhorn; but had never heard of Axe Edge, Masson, Crich Cliff, Thorpe Cloud, and Kinderscout. He probably knew more of the Peak of Teneriffe than of the Peak of Derbyshire. The latter he, like many other people, no doubt dismissed as a solitary rocky altitude, instead of a wide expanse of alternating moor and meadow and mountain, green valley and glancing stream, limestone tor and forest ridge; a single peak, instead of a stretch of poetic country which, while it absorbs most of the shire of Derby, embraces the counties of Stafford and Nottingham, and loses itself in Cheshire and Yorkshire, only to reappear in Lakeland, and afterwards across the Border. No; 'Kalmat' knew nothing of the Peak country. Derbyshire to him was a *terra incognita*. He could go hundreds, yea thousands, of miles away, in search of the romantic, but he neglected the 'beauty-spots' close at hand. He sinned with many. Scenery, like charity, should begin at home. It is to home we come last of all to find it.

It wanted a couple of hours to noon, so I prevailed upon 'Kalmat' to stay and have a day in Derbyshire. I planned a walk that should enrapture him. The June sun came through the window, and supported the invitation with promises of an unclouded

day. The wind brought messages of scent from the country. We were just in time for the Wirksworth train, and soon were steaming through the green valley of the Ecclesbourne. What lazy little stations! How do you pronounce 'Idridgehay'? and what do you think of 'Shottle'? The stoppage of the train at Wirksworth brings the short railway journey and my long introduction to a close.

* * * * *

A peaceful Peak town this Wirksworth, the key to ever so many doors of delicious scenery. None of the throb of the nineteenth century disturbs its dreamy streets: The town, clustering round the crumbling old church, is completely shut in by investing hills from the noisy world. On these hillsides Dinah Morris used to preach; near here is the workshop of Adam Bede; there is the Hall Farm; and yonder is Donniethorne Chase; for it is in this district that George Eliot found the characters and scenes of one of the noblest novels in the literature of fiction. 'Kalamat' is hungry for the legends of the place; but in Wirksworth you are not liable to 'break your shins against history.' The Roman and Saxon lead-workings are a reminiscence of the past industrial importance of the town, and are certainly more interesting than the more modern limestone quarries and kilns which are blurring the beauty of the rocks. But the most mendacious local guide cannot hope to point out a dungeon in which Mary Queen of Scots was confined, or a ruined wall which was ever the butt of Cromwell's cannon. One charming custom of the past, however, clings to the place. 'Kalamat' has never heard of Wirksworth 'Well Dressings.' The festival

of well-flowering is a piece of ancient poetry which appears to be preserved only in the Peak. The early summer time brings Derbyshire people several celebrations of the kind. Each public well or spring is converted into a floral shrine, formed in the first instance by wood covered with wet clay and white plaster. This framework receives a magic mosaic of wild-flowers, an arabesque of blossom. The woods and valleys are waited upon for decorative subscriptions, and respond liberally. Forget-me-nots, hyacinths, lilacs, and violets contribute gradations of blue. The gold is given by the tassels of the laburnum, the blossom of the furze bush, and the rich buttercup. More subdued tints are presented by gray lichens and brown mosses. The tender spring shoots of the yew give a light green, and the winter foliage of the same tree supplies a sombre shade. Crimson berries produce a gleam of gay colour. White daisies are embroidered by deft fingers into doves and lambs. Scripture texts are worked in blended wild-flowers, and framed with feathery ferns. The designs show the village architects to be true artists—poets, painters, sculptors, though they may not be able to read or write. They produce floral pictures, poems in flowers. Arches and temples, spires and towers, are built out of blossoms. Bible allegories are made in flowers. The ceremony is an antiquated one, and perhaps no more pleasing custom is left in 'merrie England.' Let us hope that civilisation, which has given us much and robbed us of more, will not frighten this lingering festival from the Derbyshire hills.

Me! This gossip about well-dressing has been above a mile long. We have sauntered up-hill

out of the town, and are now at the foot of Stonnis: a group of piled-up embattled crags so ponderous and sombre that they have been called the Black Rocks. The shape of this dark ridge suggests, even to a mind not given to ready comparisons, an impregnable bastion. The top-most blocks projecting over the precipice look like threatening cannon. The highest of them are pointed out the furthest; and one monster mass of iron-like stone, a natural 100-ton gun, broad at the breech, and narrow towards the muzzle, aims across the land, as if the tall pine gunners standing behind had orders to open fire on the battlements of Ribber Castle on the opposite hill. Across the metals of the High Peak railway, writhing through the hilly country like a serpent of steel, and then a steep ascent for us knee-deep in ferns and over fallen rocks. A stiff climb up the side of gray grit-stones, with here and there a friendly young tree to lend assistance to the outstretched hand, and then a grateful rest on the wind-swept summit; a green carpet of velvet pile, with a poetical crest of pines waving their storm-rent funereal plumes above, and a mossy wood behind. 'Kalmat' admits that below is one of the sublimest views he ever beheld. It is certainly one of the most romantic prospects in Derbyshire. Fairyland is at our feet; a wide-reaching radius of romance; a painter's dream of landscape loveliness; one of the largest areas of bird's-eye view that the eye can enjoy. We sit and let the scene sketch itself on our memory, photograph its outlines on a mental collodion-plate. Let me focus the camera while the sun is on the picture, and secure it by the 'instantaneous process.' A stone dropped from our obser-

vatory would alight upon the High Peak railway—a mineral line—that is winding round curves which make one shudder for the safety of the approaching train, panting in the distance up gradients that seem to upset the law of gravitation. Low down to the left lies Wirksworth hid in the white vapour of the limekilns; climbing up the roadside, past those precipitous stone-quarries, is Middleton; that intersection in the hills below is where the Via Gellia valley traces its romantic course; beyond a patchwork of green fields gray with sheep, so motionless that they appear to be protruding pieces of limestone; fields, by the way, divided by low walls of loose stone, for the shade of hedgerows is unknown in the Peak country. Right down in the hollow at our feet nestles Cromford. The sun flashes back its bright beams from the windows of the Arkwright mills. There is the church, and the river-bridge, and the Derwent, now a band of silver in the meadows, now lost among the trees, then radiant in the valley again, and anon absorbed by the woods of Alderwasley, where the directing finger of a sunbeam points to Crich Stand, shining in the blue hazy distance, like a Cleopatra's needle, on the crest of the great gray cliff. 'Kalmat' is enchanted with the view of Matlock in the middle distance, which the eye, skipping over Cromford, lingers upon long and lovingly. The tall projecting crags, that break through the foliage and overhang the curving river, seem small from this altitude, where we look down upon the swelling hills that expand above the cliffs and reach to the horizon line. The highest point across the valley is where the towers of Ribber stand out clear-cut against the summer sky. Be-

low, like the other Matlock rocks, dwarfed in dimensions by the eminences above, is the majestic mass of limestone, the pride and glory of Matlock—the High Tor. Opposite to it rises Masson with its plume of pines; while the wooded villa-dotted spur of hill down at its side is the Heights of Abraham. Beyond Matlock, where the sunlight ripples over an ocean of gorse and wild-thyme and heather, is Ashover; and, right away in the picturesque perspective, hill and dale, cottage and farm and hall, and white winding roads—— But there! my prepared plate is not large enough for the picture, and ‘Kalmat’ is reading aloud the ‘testimony of the rocks,’ scratched by the penknives of a nation of enthusiastic Smiths and Browns and Joneses and Robinsons. The Black Rocks seem to be the happy hunting-ground of amateur stone-cutters. One adventurous mortal, not to be outdone by the John Smith who tried to carve his name on the iron face of the mighty mystic Sphinx, or the Robinsons who leave their autographs on the Pyramids, has cut his initials on the very nose of the highest projecting rock that hangs sheer over the giddy precipice. The author of this folly must have crawled to the brain-reeling point, and lain prone while he toiled at his madman’s monogram. ‘Kalmat’ says he shall be disappointed if that man’s epitaph is not to be found among the rocks below. Some penknives have broken out into verse; one has elaborated a drawing of a quadruped entitled ‘Balaam’s Ass;’ and in places where the rock has been too flinty for persevering steel, the scribblers have taken their distressed blades to the naked trunks of the pines, and entered their names and the day of

the month upon the bronzed bark.

Scrambling down again, and on to the turnpike leading to Middleton, with a marching accompaniment from a band of birds—the trumpet of thrush, the bassoon of cuckoo, the clarinet of blackbird, the piccolo of robin, and the fife of linnet. The laburnum hangs out its banners on the outer walls of a roadside cottage, and there is an intoxicating sweetness from the purple lilacs. Middleton is one long, narrow, straggling, sordid street, climbing up the shoulder of a hill so steep that the wonder is the houses do not push each other down. One or two pretty houses, flanked and fronted with garden gleams of colour, only serve to lend additional meagreness to the little struggling shops and hovels. The hamlet might have been borrowed from Bulgaria, or it might illustrate Goldsmith’s *Deserted Village*. Some of the houses turn their backs on you. Others are in ruins. The thick stone walls are crumbling into decay. The rafters are grass-grown and desolate. The decline of lead-mining has made the village a vulgar Baalbec. The tumble-down tenements are so many melancholy *Hic jacets* of a departed industry. But Middleton (whose name, by the way, is shared by a much prettier village in the Peak) gives access to the Via Gellia, one of the sweetest of Derbyshire valleys.

Deep down winds the secluded valley between steep mountain walls of living green, broken here and there by the gray scarp of a ragged limestone crag. The ambushade on either hand, noisy with birds and fragrant with perfumes that a Rimmel could never extract, is a study of trees. On the lower waves of the billowy sea of green a thicket of dense undergrowth, wild-briers, woodbines, hollies,

and hazel and blackberry bushes that in the autumn time will make the *Via Gellia* a forest of fruit. Over this tangle the willow droops her pale leaves, half hid in the luminous leafage of branching limes and the stout foliage of alders and chestnuts. Higher still, the silvery birch, 'the lady of the woods,' waves her winsome tresses, and the mountain-ash disputes a place with the larches and sycamores and maples and the young oaks that are being strangled in their upward growth by the tendrils of the picturesque but paralysing ivy; while right above the bright broad boles of these trees the dark spires of the sombre fir and the storm-stained pine-spines stand out erect on the windy edge of the summit in a solitude of their own, a *chevaux de frise* against the sky. It is a valley of flowers. The roadside is starred with primroses. Lilies-of-the-valley are as common here as the buttercups in May meadows. The blue eyes of the forget-me-not, heavy with tears, peep from the bankside. The bluebell and the white convolvulus gem the verdure. The pale wood anemone is mixed up in a 'fern paradise' of gray moss and lichen and trembling maiden-hair, and the coy violet betrays her presence in scent. A chattering little stream runs alongside the road. Presently comes a Gothic cottage, and at its side Dunsley Waterfall, leaping, a white wave of foam, from the hill-top, shouts with joy as it tumbles down the rocks to be welcomed by the laughing little rivulet, which has changed its course from our left hand to our right, momentarily ceasing its chatter to pass under the road unobserved.

A felled tree in the glade by the water-margin begs us to be seated. Our satchel is opened. There is an epicurean flavour about

our sandwiches for which an Apicius or a Lucullus might have craved. 'Hunger-sauce' makes them appetising. The fresh elastic air is a sort of ethereal champagne. Our tablecloth of green is adorned with Nature's *epergnes* of wild-flowers, and a choir of feathered choristers are singing while we eat. The odour from our pipes now mixes with the resinous scent of the trees. The only sound is that of birds and brook. Such experiences as these are the renewals of life. They are payments into the Bank of Health, leaving a balance in hand to meet the claims of Sickness when he steps in for his dividend. The country is the true physician. When Hercules could lift Antæus from the fields he was too strong for the giant; but when Antæus again touched the green earth, he was inspired with new vigour, and at once overcame his foe. The fields and woodlands freshen us for the fight against Hercules, as they did the mythical Antæus. Poor Mortimer Collins has applied the classic conceit in verse.

Sauntering down the valley again. There are dark gaps in the universal green that excite curiosity. They turn out to be ancient lead-workings. The adventurous 'Kalmat' pilots the path into the cavernous gloom of one of these vaults. We light a newspaper torch, and stumble over the stones underfoot. Ugh! the water breaks from the cold walls on our left, and there is a channel of water on our right. The damp mine winds in its rocky course for a hundred yards or more. There is an unearthly sound of weird water rumbling into unknown depths in front. The newspaper flambeau is giving out, and we see the wet walls and each other's face in a spectral, shuddering, Rembrandt light. Suppose

we should stumble on the victim of some secret murder in this deserted cave? Suppose—'Kalmat' positively proposes to ignite some letters he has found in his pocket; but I give ominous hints of 'fire-damp' and 'choke-damp.' It is damp enough anyway; and so we turn back to the opening, which has diminished into the size of a threepenny-piece, and I inwardly resolve to introduce the scene in a blood-curdling chapter of my ghastly romance, the *Lost Lead-Miner: a Secret of the Hills*. The glad light again, with the sprightly stream rambling through a bed of furze and fern and fox-gloves and flowers, until it is directed into a sort of continuous wooden trough, green with lichen and clinging weeds; but the glancing water despises the restraint, and wanders out of the artificial channel into mossy windings of its own. Half a mile of this wild beauty, and then comes a cluster of cottages, colour-works, lime-kilns, and cupola furnaces. The trees wear a dimmer green. The birds are less blithe. The water of the rivulet is reddened, like a little Alma, as if with blood; but a little further on in its progress it becomes pure and pellucid again, like a soul that has been washed from sin, and forms itself into linked reservoirs, fed by tributary streams that trickle down the hill-side. There is an old weedy water-wheel by the roadside in an artist's setting of scenery, and presently comes the sign of the Pig of Lead, a hostelry that reminds us that we have reached Bonsall. Shall we pursue the rivulet to the cotton-mill romance of Cromford, or desert it for the beauties of Bonsall? The difficulty of decision is a great one. Both paths have particular charms. We are in the position of the classic donkey,

which perished between two bundles of equally dainty hay; of De Quincey, who, having six hours to spend in London when passing through, spent them on the steps of the hotel vainly endeavouring to decide what to go and see; of the typical Englishman of the time in the old cartoon, who stands naked amid a great pile of garments, embarrassed as to which clothes he shall wear. 'Kalmat' solves the problem by a vulgar expedient—heads, Bonsall; tails, Cromford. It is heads.

A primitive little village, this Bonsall, with a hundred and fifty marble bridges. So the local joke puts it; for the rivulet, which runs down the side of the street, is crossed at the cottage-doors by doorsteps of Derbyshire marble. Bonsall once boasted a market, and a prim market-cross climbs up from a basement of a dozen steps or more to proudly assert the fact. But the most picturesque object in this old-world village is the venerable church, which stands upon a rocky elevation and gives its benediction over the heads of the houses that are kneeling beneath. The landscape from this tranquil churchyard on the steep shoulder of the hill, with the westering sun throwing up his last lances of light from the Wirksworth hills, and the valley lying in a shining stillness, is one of the most pleasing visions of the day. Through the churchyard, where the trees are tapping, tapping at the windows of the old church; past the grand old yew, gloomy with age, for it has braved the storms and basked in the sunshine of centuries; and over the hills in the sunset light to Matlock, which bursts abruptly upon us below—a *coup de théâtre* of wooded hill, jutting crag, bright river, and pretty houses all steeped in the last glow of day.

Down the steep side of Mason, over somebody's fences, to a late dinner at the Devonshire. A balcony at the hotel overhangs the Derwent, whose bosom is now jewelled with a trembling star. We are sitting outside in the twilight, with coffee and cigars, facing the old rook-haunted elms of the Lovers' Walks, with the river murmuring down below, and the evening breeze bringing the musical roar of the weir up the stream. It would be pleasant to linger; but the warm glow has died out of the sky, a mist is rising from the water, the wooded banks opposite are becoming black and shadowy. It is, moreover, train-time. So we leave for the station, carrying away with us choice vignettes photographed on the brain; so many pleasant dreams to be recalled when we are confronted by the crushing realities of life;

poems to be read amid drear pages of prose; summer sunshine to be borrowed on dark wintry days with lowering skies, brutal winds, and blinding fogs; green oases in the sandy Sahara of existence to cheer 'our uneasy steps over the burning waste.'

* * * * *

ÉPILOGUE.

I am emptying the inkstand again. It is autumn now. The post brings me a letter from 'Kalmat.' He says: 'I own with humility that I have been scandalously neglectful of the charms of my own country; for England, I am finding out, is the most beautiful place in the world. That Derbyshire of yours is a pocket-edition of Switzerland, a microcosm of all that is romantic in Nature. I can only pay penance for my past neglect by making another Pilgrimage to the Peak.'

STREPHON.



THE CURIOUS ADVENTURES OF A FIELD CRICKET.

CHAPTER XXI.

A TERRIBLE ACCUSATION.

AFTER having run for about an hour, I paused. The clearing could not be far off, and it seemed to me that I ought to have reached it by this time. Escorted by the ants to the scene of action, I had not thought to note the features of the landscape to help me on my way back; for of course I had never dreamt of returning alone. I had suddenly come to a place where nothing grew but fir-trees. I was certain we had not passed it in the morning.

There was no longer any room for doubt. I had lost my way. Feeling very uneasy, I caught sight of a snail, which was slowly crawling over some moss hard by. I ran up to him, and asked him if he could direct me to the ant-hill; but at the first words I spoke the stupid mollusc drew himself into his shell, and I could not induce him to come out again.

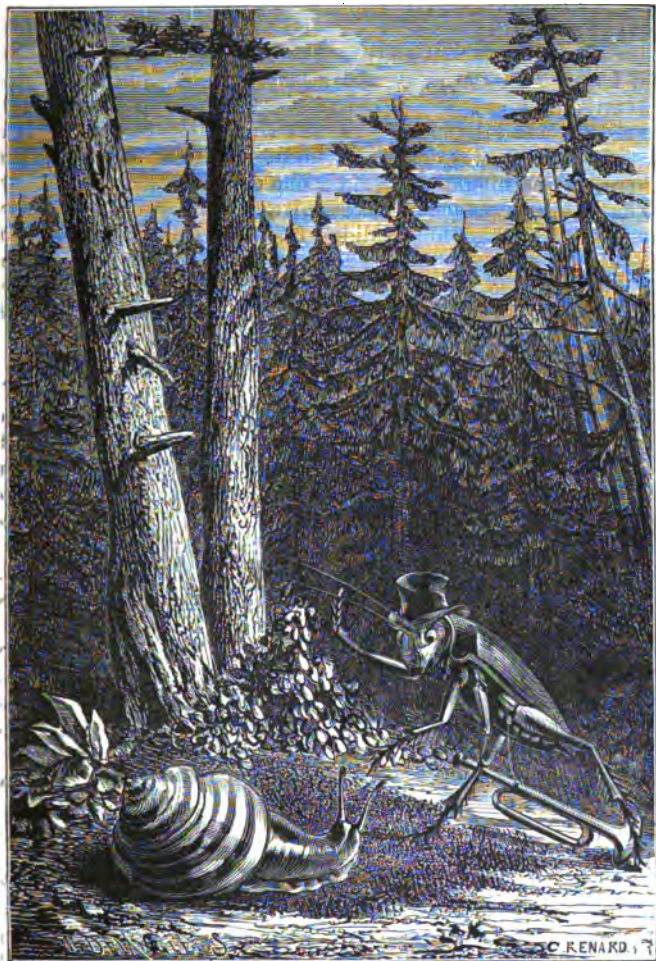
What was I to do? The fir-wood did not seem to be of any

great extent, but how was I to know which way to turn to get into the right road? Should I go to the right or to the left? It was impossible to know which was correct.

I decided on the left. Some insects of whom I made inquiries could tell me nothing definite. Some of sluggish habits had never even heard of the ant-hill; others knew it, but gave me contradictory directions. Others, again, asked which ant-hill I wanted, as there were two in the wood. I did not know which any more than they did, but I explained that the one I was seeking was in a clearing at the foot of two beeches. At that I was told that they were both in a clearing; and as for whether one of them was or was not at the foot of two beeches, they did not know, for they had not noticed. At last, after much wandering to and fro, I was fortunate enough to meet an ant-beetle.

I told him of the awkward position in which I found myself, and explained why I was so anxious to find my way. He pointed it out to me, and even offered to

accompany me; but as he could not walk very fast, and the directions he gave me were most precise, I thanked him for his courtesy, and resumed my journey,



hoping this time to reach my goal.

I was worn out with fatigue, and it was beginning to get dark when I reached the clearing.

Having rapidly considered my bearings, I ran to the spot where the reserve corps had been stationed in the morning, not, if the

truth be told, with any great hope of finding it, nor at all shutting my eyes to the probable consequences of the delay in giving the message with which I was intrusted.

The thought that I had been the involuntary cause of the delay filled me with regret.

Why had I not taken the ant on my back who had been

sent to me by our distressed troops? She would have directed me. But one cannot think of everything; and being almost off my head when I started on the spur of the moment, I never considered that, as I was not in the habit of going about in the wood, I might lose my way and fail to arrive in time.

At last I reached the spot where we had halted. It was deserted.

There was nothing left for me to do but to return without further delay to the ant-hill, which I did forthwith.

The doors were being barricaded when I arrived, and the guards seemed surprised to see me returning alone. My first words were to ask for news of the army. None had been received, and now that I had come I was expected to bring tidings. There was great uneasiness, I was told, as to the fate of the expeditionary force. In a few words I imparted all I knew, and in an instant the ant-hill was in a state of ferment.

I had to repeat my story some twenty times, as I was dragged to the public room, where a consultation was to be held at once.

There, as may be imagined, the excitement was intense, and all manner of conjectures were hazarded as to the fate of the army, each one expressing his own opinion, till the hubbub became deafening. The prevailing idea, however, was that the battle had lasted until nightfall, and that the army was now in full retreat on the ant-hill. Had it been beaten? Had it been victorious? Was the retreat, if retreat it indeed were, being made in good order, or was it a rout? Then came endless suggestions. Some proposed that messengers should be sent out to obtain news; others, and these were in the majority,

thought it would be better to wait, seeing that nothing would be gained by early intelligence: if the army were beaten, they should hear it soon enough; if it were victorious, the expeditionary corps would be back very shortly; in any case nothing could be done before the morning: it would be best therefore to wait patiently.

The latter opinion carried the day. I asked for Meg; but no one could tell me where she was. After partaking of food—of which I stood urgently in need, for I was literally dying of hunger—I went back to my room, to rest from my fatigue whilst waiting for news.

I was soon sound asleep.

Towards the middle of the night a slight noise at my door woke me. Some one was cautiously calling to me. I raised one of the beams forming the door of my room, and saw Meg, who came in, looking very anxious.

She shut the door carefully, and then coming up to me she whispered,

‘Cricket, I have come to warn you that your life is in danger here; you must fly without delay.’

These words roused me completely.

‘What do you say?’ I cried. ‘My life is in danger!’

‘Yes.’

‘And why?’

‘This is why: you must know that a first body of troops has been almost entirely destroyed. This catastrophe is the result of the too-tardy arrival of the reserve corps, which was not summoned in time. You were charged with that important mission, and you know how badly you performed it. You are accused of treason!’

‘Treason! I a traitor! Why, Meg, you know I lost myself in the wood. I have made no secret of that.’

'O, of course not; that's your version of the matter; but unfortunately it does not tally with the general opinion. I repeat that you are suspected of treason.'

'But I am no traitor, Meg. I have spoken the truth. I will defend myself.'

'Don't attempt it, Cricket: my people's blood is up; your explanations would not be listened to. Is it any good to reason with a mob? It might be all very well if a trial were granted to you. But there will be no trial. They will begin by murdering you.'

'But who can have brought such an accusation against me?'

'Who, indeed? You see you have enemies here. Do you remember what I told you?'

'O yes, I remember about the bombardier beetle affair. Botheration take the stupid creature! I wish I had never met him or made my unlucky exclamation. It's not the first time that acting on impulse has got me into trouble. What am I to do?'

'Fly, as I have already told you.'

'Fly! I daresay. That's easier said than done. The colony being lit up is all against me. If I show myself in the streets—'

'If you show yourself in the streets you will inevitably be put to death. The streets are full of people. You can hear that from here. In view of the approach of the enemy, the eggs, larvæ, and pupæ are being brought down into the basement as quickly as possible. The guards have been doubled at all the doors, which are closed in preparation for a siege; there is no escape for you through them.'

'Then I am lost!'

'No, not yet. One course is left to you.'

'What is that? Tell me quickly!'

'You are able to burrow in the earth.'

'Yes; but not in wood. And we are on the trunk of a tree.'

'That's true. But, by a lucky chance, this room is on the outer borders of the ant-hill; and by digging horizontally in the wall opposite the door, you will reach the virgin soil. No road has been made on that side.'

'What a happy chance! I'll set to work at once. You'll go with me, Meg?'

'Impossible. If I were absent when your flight is first discovered, I should certainly be accused of complicity with you, and it would soon be all over with me.'

'But I may lose myself underground.'

'O, no, you won't. If you follow the instructions I give you carefully, you will easily escape.'

'Say on, then.'

'You must pierce a horizontal passage opposite that door. When you get beyond the ant-hill—that is to say, when you have gone a distance equal to some fifteen or twenty times the length of your own body, which you can easily calculate—you must direct your course upwards. You can't fail to reach the surface of the ground, and you had better manage not to arrive there till to-morrow night.'

'O, it will take me quite that time to make my gallery. Will they not pursue me underground?'

'It's not very likely that they will. Throw the earth behind you as you advance. I'll take care to remove all traces of your work here. You will be supposed to have escaped by one of the doors, and you will be hunted for outside in the morning.'

'And when I get outside to-morrow night?'

'You will run away as fast as you can.'

'I shall lose myself again.'

'Call to me in a whisper; I'll take care to be within hearing.'

'Then good-bye, Meg; or rather, *au revoir*. Believe me, I am most grateful.'

'O yes, yes, I know all that; but don't waste time in talking. Set to work at once; we may be surprised at any moment.'

'One word more. Suppose I come to a stone?'

'That will be your look-out.

Go round it, only take care to keep in the right direction.'

'I'll try to.'

As I spoke I began to burrow, and the ground not being very hard I was soon buried to a depth of twice the length of my body. I flung the soil behind me, and Meg hastened to fill up the opening I had made; thus removing all trace of the mode in which I had made my escape.

'Good luck go with you!' she cried at the last moment; 'and good-bye till to-morrow.'



CHAPTER XXII.

I ESCAPE, AND DECIDE THAT I HAVE HAD ADVENTURES ENOUGH.

I WAS now buried at a considerable depth and in complete darkness. I was thrown entirely on my own resources.

I had to burrow in a straight line, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left.

I set vigorously to work with my forefeet, taking care to burrow straight before me. No easy matter, I can tell you; for no one knows how difficult it is to follow a given direction without the aid of one's eyes.

As I crumbled the soil before me I flung it behind me, so that it was not exactly a passage I formed, but a kind of little square cell. I could not have gone back without turning round. I was obliged to continue to advance; and my chief fear was that I might come to some big stone, which would compel me to deviate from my course; in which case I should become confused, and run a risk of returning to the ant-hill, which it was so much to my interest to avoid.

Whilst I was busily digging

away with feet and jaws, I reflected thus:

‘You see, Cricket, what has come of your ambitious dreams. You are obliged to flee like a malefactor from the town where you had hoped some day to reign. A few hours ago you were intoxicated with cries of “Long live the Cricket!” and the very voices which uttered them are now execrating you. O, the vanity of popular success! And what was the cause of this sad downfall? A thoughtless exclamation; an unlucky combination of circum-



stances. What ever induced you to applaud the prowess of that worthless bombardier beetle? The ungrateful wretch never gave you a word of thanks, and you made enemies who are having their revenge now. When will you learn not to act on impulse? Well, you have certainly had adventures enough now. If you get safe and sound out of this one, you will retire to some quiet spot, and spend the rest of your days far from noise and turmoil. You are not fitted for a life of excitement. Leave others to run about the

world. True happiness is to be found everywhere. There's no need to seek it painfully at a distance. It consists in being content with a little; in not craving after more than the necessities of life. And your wants are few, Cricket. You will divide your time between the culture of the arts and the contemplation of the beauties of Nature. To these you must henceforth limit your ambition.'

Several hours were spent in digging. I seemed to have made very good progress; but I began

to feel terribly cramped in my subterranean cavern. In spite of all my efforts, I could not so throw the earth I displaced in front as to make it occupy exactly its original position behind me, and the consequence was that I became more and more straitened for space. But for that, however, all went well. I was fortunate enough to have thus far met with no stone or other insuperable obstacle.

When I thought I had proceeded far enough in a horizontal direction to be beyond the limits of the ant-hill, I began to direct my course upwards; and then paused, partly to rest and partly to wait for the evening, as I must not arrive at the surface before night. I was getting very hungry, but it was of no use to think of eating then.

'Let's go to sleep,' I said to myself. 'Who sleeps, dines.'

And with that I fell asleep.

My sleep lasted a long time, and refreshed me greatly. When I woke I set to work again, and it seemed to me that the earth became softer, which proved that my rescue was nearly accomplished. A little later I was outside. It was night. At a short distance from me rose the ant-hill, silent and gloomy as it had been on the evening of my first arrival.

'Meg,' I murmured in a low voice—'Meg!' I waited a few minutes; then I repeated in a louder key, 'Meg!'

I then made out an ant advancing cautiously through the darkness. She had but one antenna. It was Meg.

'O, it is you, Cricket!' she said. 'It's all quiet now. Come out, and run as quickly as you can under that heather. I will follow you.' I did as she suggested, and she soon joined me beneath the tuft of heather under which I had

taken refuge for the time. 'Here you are, safe and sound, then,' went on Meg. 'Your underground journey went off well?'

'It couldn't have gone off better,' was my reply. 'But I am dying of hunger.'

'I provided for that. Here is some sugar I brought for you.'

I hastened to appease my appetite; and whilst I was eating, Meg told me all that had passed during the day. I had not left my room a minute too soon the previous evening; for just after my escape, the ants had arrived *en masse* to punish me, my enemies having spread the report of my reputed treason. Their fury on finding my room empty was immense; but fortunately the way in which I had made my exit did not occur to them. They hunted for me everywhere, both in and about the ant-hill; but at last, tired out, they gave up the vain search, and the gravity of subsequent events had made them forget all about me.

In fact, very serious things had taken place. I learnt that the first body of troops had been cut to pieces, and almost completely destroyed; that the reserve corps, surprised at receiving no tidings of their comrades, had themselves marched in the course of the afternoon, and after a long tramp had met some fugitives, who had told them of the catastrophe which had occurred in the ravine. Lastly, that whilst they were deliberating as to what was to be done, the enemy surrounded them in their turn and cut them to pieces, as they had done their predecessors. A few ants, some fifty at the most, had escaped, and after wandering about in the wood nearly all night had regained the ant-hill.

'This morning,' added Meg, 'a second army, larger than the first,

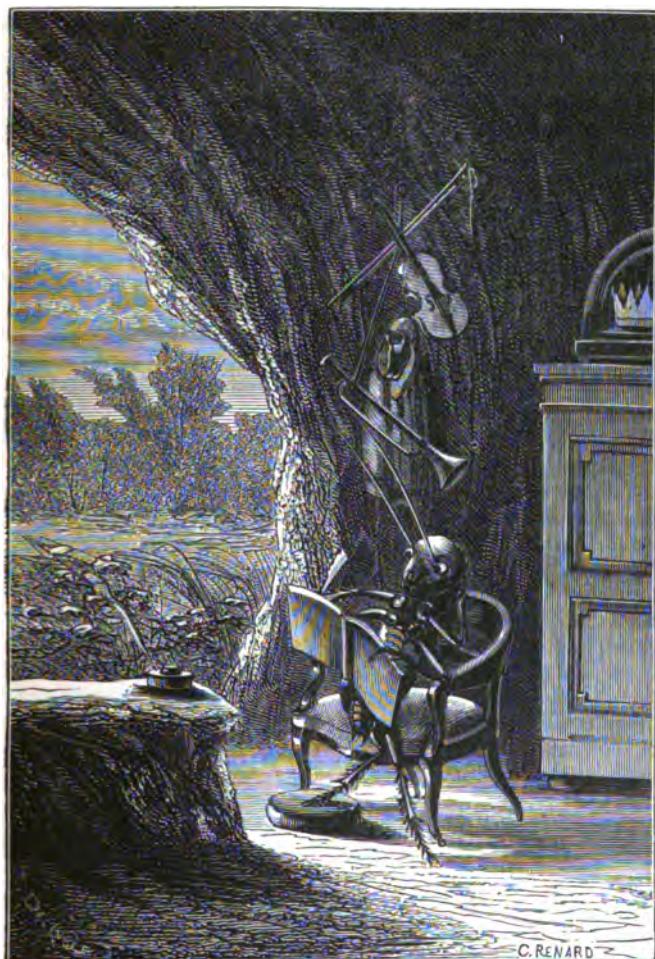
set out for the frontier. Fighting has been going on without any definite result, although our forces have had to retire from the field of battle. The losses have been enormous on both sides. That is how things stand at present.'

'Shall you begin again to-morrow?'

'Without the slightest doubt.'

'But how will it all end?'

'I am very much afraid it will end badly for us. From what one of my friends, who took part in the



last battle, tells me, it must have been an awful struggle. Our troops behaved splendidly, but the enemy mustered in vast numbers. Every hour reinforcements arrived for them. They literally seemed to spring from the ground, to fall

from the trees, to be rained from the skies.'

'It strikes me that the best thing I can do now is to make off as fast as I can. Eh, Meg?'

'I quite agree with you, friend.'

'I can be of no use to you?'

'None whatever.'

'Then I'm off. You'll go a little way with me?'

'Yes, I'll see you to the hollow path: you'll be all right then.'

'Thanks; I shall be glad if you will, or I shall certainly lose myself again in this stupid wood, which I wish was at Jericho.'

'But when you cross the clearing,' added Meg, 'you must do so alone. We might meet a few late fugitives belonging to our ant-hill, and if I were seen with you—you understand?'

'O yes, I understand perfectly. You have only to follow me at a distance.'

'We might do better than that. You see that white trunk down there with the moonbeams shining upon it? It's a birch, and there's not another hereabouts. Go to it, and wait for me at the foot of it. I'll join you there.'

'All right,' I replied.

I set off in the direction indicated, taking care to avoid exposed places, and those too vividly lit up by the moon. On my way I had reason to recognise Meg's prudence, for I met an ant. The news that I was wandering about in the neighbourhood would therefore certainly be made known in the ant-hill. For myself, personally, I had nothing more to fear, for it was not to be supposed that the ants would leave home in the night to hunt for me; they would not have a chance of success if they did.

Arrived without difficulty at the foot of the birch, I there awaited Meg, who soon joined me.

We walked for some little distance without speaking. We had to make frequent detours to avoid stumps of trees, clumps of bracken, tufts of grass, and of other plants. But for Meg I should never have found my way out of the labyrinth; but she was quite at home

in the wood, and in spite of the darkness she advanced with the greatest confidence. All was silent and peaceful. I did not feel as nervous in the wood as I had done when I first entered it. That was doubtless the result of my feeling of security after the long hours of anxiety and fatigue I had had to go through.

We reached the hollow path without any adventures.

'I must leave you here,' said Meg; 'if you follow the hollow path you will get out of the wood. Where are you going to live?'

'I am quite undecided on that point,' I replied; 'but it will probably be in the strawberry-bed.'

'You will settle there permanently?'

'Yes, I think I shall; I have had enough of adventures. When I was underground I reflected very seriously, and I have resolved henceforth to lead the life of a hermit. My tastes incline me to a life of contemplation. The experiences of the last week have taught me many things, amongst others that there is no place like home. To-morrow I shall dig myself a comfortable little residence in some suitable locality, and I hope there to end my days in peace.'

'A delightful plan, truly; but are you not afraid of being dull all alone?'

'No, I don't think I shall be dull. I shall have plenty to think of for a long time. Remember what adventures I have had.'

'I tell you what,' laughed Meg; 'instead of thinking of them write them; then they may perhaps be useful to others.'

'Who can tell?'

'And now, friend, I must hasten back as quickly as I can. It is not for me to form plans for a peaceful life. Our positions are

also very different. I am one of a society, each member of which must contribute to the best of his or her ability to the common good. *Au revoir*, Cricket!

'To our next meeting, Meg!'

With that we separated. Shall I own that I felt deeply moved? But why should I not own it? The reader now knows me well enough not to be surprised at my agitation. I had known Meg but a few days, it is true; but in that short time she had given proof of sincere and ready friendship, in fact of positive devotion. And then the circumstances under which we had met led to as great an intimacy as if we had lived together for years. There are people who give their affections in return not for what they receive, but for the services they themselves render, and I am one of those people.

'Come, friend Cricket,' I said to myself, shaking myself and springing into the ravine, 'you are becoming quite a sentimentalist. It is the effect of the calmness of the night, the silence of the woods, and of the moonlight. Night-time still seems to affect your nerves, and in woods you are always either timid or sentimental. You know no medium. You had certainly better not settle in a wood.'

It would not have been prudent to follow the hollow path in the dead of the night, so I determined to go into the first crevice I came to, and remain there till the morning. The refuge I sought was soon found in the form of a projecting stone. I crept beneath it, and was soon wrapped in a peaceful dreamless sleep, such as I had not enjoyed for a long time.

At sunrise I resumed my journey, and arrived without accident

at the strawberry-bed. It was a fine morning, and I was in such good spirits that everything seemed *couleur de rose*. The incidents of the last few days, the emotions I had experienced when I first reached the ant-hill, the battle in which I had taken part, and my subterranean flight,—all seemed to me to be some terrible dream, and I was more than ever resolved henceforth to lead a calm and retired life.

I crossed the wild paddock to the rabbit-burrow, where I found everything as I had left it a few days previously. The stone beneath which I had taken refuge for several hours, and the gooseberry-bush which half overshadowed it, were both still there. But the spider was gone; only a few remains of her last web still hung upon the branches. What had become of her? Had she fallen a prey to some voracious bird? Had she perished in a struggle with a wasp, or had she again been the victim of a sphex? It was impossible to ascertain her fate.

Firefly had also disappeared.

I considerably enlarged the hole which I had already dug beneath the stone, and there I found the dead body of the staphylinus, which had been stupid enough to allow himself to be a second time surprised by the flood. As for the mole-cricket, I could obtain no tidings of her.

Meg came to visit me sometimes. She told me that after several battles, in which victory had been now on one side, now on the other, peace had been concluded, and that my supposed treason was forgotten.

The summer was succeeded in due course by the autumn, which gradually stripped the strawberry-bushes of their leaves and turned the foliage of the woods yellow.

Meg had once jokingly suggested that I should write my memoirs; later she alluded seriously to the matter; and it ended in my putting the idea into execution. I made

a collection of oak-leaves to serve as paper; and with a good deal of help from Meg I committed to writing the adventures you have just read.

THE END.



SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER XVII. THE LATERAL VALLEYS.

THE first and most beautiful of these lateral valleys is the Val d'Iliez, where Nature presents us with a combination of soft loveliness and colossal grandeur, and has favoured her children with a fertile soil, remarkable personal beauty, and the enjoyment of good health. The valley opens opposite Bex, and slopes gently up the sides of the Dent du Midi to the ice-clad mountains on the borders of Savoy. It contains the cheerful villages of Troistorrens, Iliez, and Champéry, all of which are pleasantly shaded by splendid chestnut and walnut trees, and are charmingly idyllic in character, while its mountains are covered with ancient oaks and dark fir-woods. Nowhere do the meadows look more resplendently and luxuriantly green. The slopes are bordered with chalets quite up to the top; below, the impetuous swift-rushing Viège thunders through the valley; and as we look back we have a view of the beautiful mountains of Bex, the Dent de Morcles, and the wild Diablerets. The people are lively and intelligent, and their manners are still pure and simple; and the valley, which is thoroughly pastoral in character, is one of the most beautiful in the canton. Those who care for something besides glaciers, and like to enjoy the peculiar pleasures of life among the Alps with some degree of comfort, will find an inexhaustible fund of enjoyment in the Val d'Iliez.

Better known, perhaps, however, is the Val d'Hérens, which lies in the heart of Valais, and possesses a glorious view of the glacier-world in the south. It begins at Sion, but soon branches into the western valley or vale of Héremence, and the eastern or Eringer Thal, known also as the valley of Hérens. This latter divides again some way higher up, and the new fork is called the Val Arolla.

These valleys, as well as those of Einfisich, Turtmann, Bagne, Entremont, and the great valley of St. Nicholas, have all been formed by the streams which pour down from the great chain of Alps which extends from the massive group of Monte Rosa past the Matterhorn to the Grand Combin. The Val d'Hérens is watered by the Borgne; and Evolena, a mountain eyrie—brown, or rather black, with age—is the centre whence innumerable expeditions are made to the snowy mountains on the other side of the stream. On our way up hither from Sion we pass the village of Vex by a tolerable carriage-road recently constructed.

The queen of the mountains hereabouts is the Dent Blanche, who calmly surveys the landscape from the proud elevation of her throne of ice. The inn of Evolena is called in honour of her the Hôtel de la Dent Blanche, and deserves to be commended, though it is not always large enough to accommodate all the visitors who flock hither in



SKETCH IN THE VALLEY OF ZERMATT.

the summer. It is well adapted for summer quarters, and those who wish to study the native manners and customs of the mountaineers of Valais cannot do better than stay here for a time.

There are special opportunities for getting up the subject on holidays and feast-days, but even on weekdays the loneliness of the mountain-paths is often relieved by the figure of a woman riding on a mule; and on Sundays the whole population of the valley may be seen riding up to the surrounding heights.

Very charming excursions may be made to this spot; and those who wish to have the pleasure of gathering edelweiss and other rare Alpine flowers with their own hands, while they see their dreams of the Alps actually realised before their eyes, cannot do better than descend into the little valley of Arzinol, the one chosen abode of the nymph of whom the young cowherds talk enthusiastically as the source of all their good fortune.

But let us look away, and over the heads of all the other mountains, to the black Matterhorn. No matter where one may be, the eye reverts to it again and again, for it is the most singular in form and the boldest in outline of all the Alps, and as such is indelibly impressed upon the memory.

The Matterhorn, formerly called the Great Horn by the inhabitants of Zermatt, and also known under the names of Mont Cervin and Monte Silvio, stands at the back of the valleys of Zermatt and Tournanche, on the frontier of Italy and Switzerland, and attains a height of nearly fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The pinnacle itself, which rises from out the glaciers which cover the crest of the Alps of Valais, is some four thousand

feet in height, and is in form an obelisk with sharply-cut edges, and smooth, black, bare sides. Looking at it from Zermatt, one feels crushed and overpowered by its magnitude; and it may well seem utterly inaccessible to the puny beings who crawl around its base—indeed, it is difficult even now to understand how so many persons have succeeded in reaching its summit.

Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew, is one of those who is said to have visited it. He is described as coming to the valley of the Visp, climbing the Matterhorn, and finding upon its summit a handsome town embowered among luxuriant vines and tall waving trees. Then the spirit of prophecy comes upon him, and he foretells its downfall, adding:

'Again, a third time, maybe I shall come,
But I shall look in vain for these fair meads!

The blooming vines, the flowery vales,
are gone—

A glacier makes a desert in their stead,
Rears its white crags fantastic in mid-air,
And rolls its dark-green billows down
the slope!

Herds of the most beautiful chamois and wild goats live and feed together in the pastures, and besides these there are numbers of other strange and wonderful animals. Only one chamois hunter out of twenty can ever succeed in reaching this delightful region, and that only once in twenty years; but no one is allowed to bring any animal away with him. The names of many persons who have succeeded in getting there at different times are said to be cut upon the trunks of the trees.

On the 14th July 1865, Whymper, the boldest of all mountaineers, made the ascent from Zermatt, accompanied by Lord Francis Douglas, the Rev. Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Hadow, and succeeded in reaching the summit of the highest peak; but,

as if to justify the popular saying that only one chamois hunter in twenty ever reaches the top, Whymper's three companions paid for their daring with their lives. Their names are written in blood on the sides of the obelisk as a warning to all future generations; but the marvel is that even one should have lived to come down again. However, the ascent has been successfully made several times since 1865; and a girl of eighteen, bearing the auspicious name of Félicité, has set her foot on the brow of this most defiant of giants. Yes, 'the most defiant of giants,' for, compared with him, his neighbour Monte Rosa looks like a sublime monarch of the Alps, and wears his many-pointed crown with calm majesty and dignity. Monte Rosa rises to a height of fifteen thousand feet, extensive glaciers nestle at its feet, and it is enveloped in a snowy mantle of dazzling silvery brightness. Only two of its peaks stand actually on Italian soil; the others are on the frontier between Italy and Switzerland.

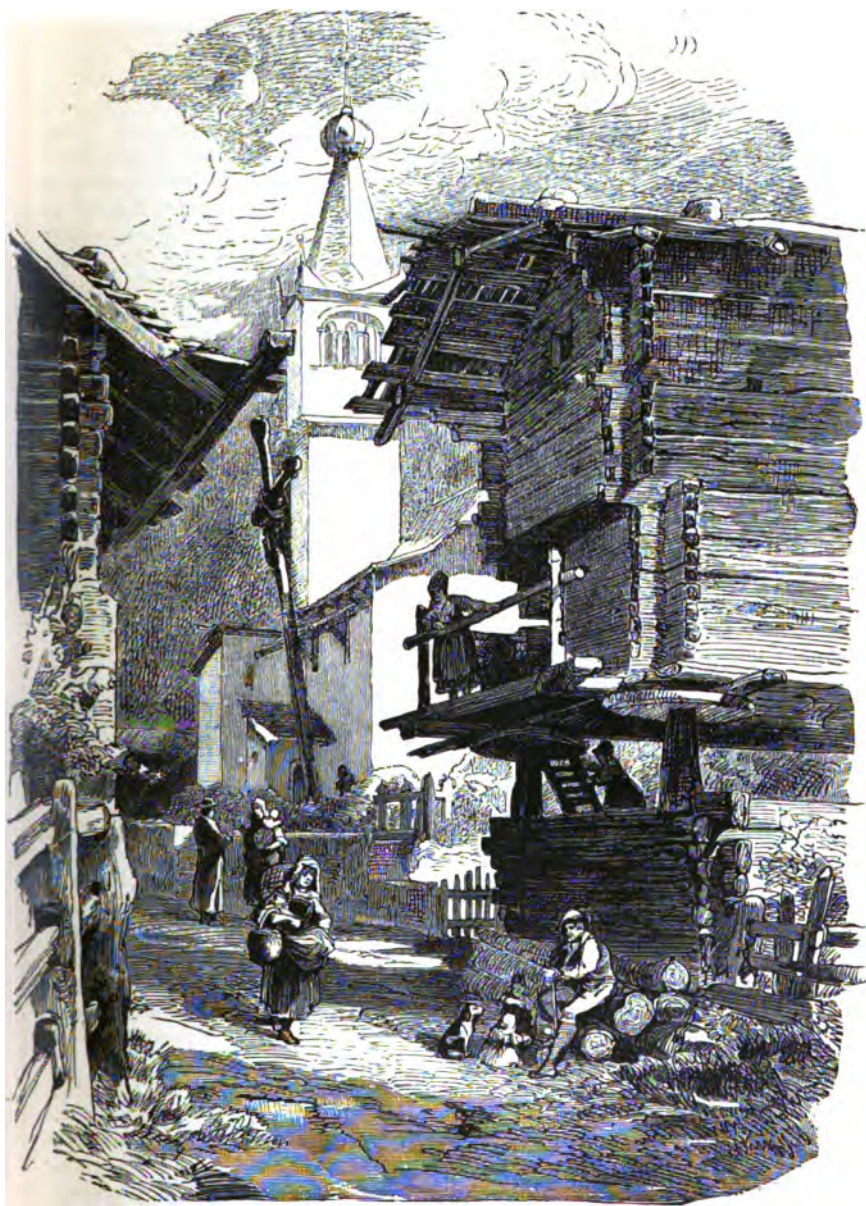
It is from the valley of Macugnaga that one gains the best idea of the size of this huge knot of mountains, which rises like a wall at the back of the upper valley. It is incontestably the mightiest of all the mighty giants which rear their snowy heads aloft in this neighbourhood; and, indeed, there is only one with which it cannot compare, namely, the great monarch of the Alps, Mont Blanc himself.

The place whence people now usually start on the numerous excursions which may be made around Monte Rosa is Zermatt (Praborgne in Italian), a village of the usual Valaisan type lying at the back of the valley of St. Nicholas. Its principal buildings are some first-class hotels, which

are always filled to overflowing during the season, and are patronised chiefly by our adventurous fellow-countrymen; but, as the longest summer is not long enough for the accomplishment of all the numerous expeditions which here present themselves in such tempting variety, the modest traveller will do well to confine himself to the beaten paths, which will amply reward him for all his exertions.

The first excursion made is usually that to the Gorner Grät and the Riffelberg, where there is a good mountain inn. The ascent from Zermatt takes us through a cool fragrant forest, and affords a splendid view of the Gorner glacier, whence the river Visp flows down into the valley. When we reach the Gorner Grät, higher up, the view becomes overpoweringly grand, and shows us alps, icebergs, snow-fields, precipices, and glacier after glacier. Yonder rise the peaks of the Cima di Jazzi and the Lykamm, and there, above all, is Monte Rosa in all its glorious splendour. Between the black savage-looking Breithorn and the Lykamm are the shining snow-covered peaks of Castor and Pollux; farther on are the Theodulshorn and Mont Cervin. Glaciers innumerable fill the valleys at their feet, and to the north rise the mighty mountains of the Bernese Oberland.

This is certainly the grandest scene in the immediate neighbourhood of Zermatt; and the other easy excursions to the Schwarzsee, the Hörnli, the Findel glacier, the Rothhorn, and Mettelhorn offer only variations of the one grand theme. On our descent through the beautiful valley of Zermatt we follow the course of the lively river Visp—through forests, by the side of lofty cliffs



VILLAGE OF TASCH.

enlivened by waterfalls, past glaciers which peep out over the trees in the distance, and past retired primeval-looking villages with old brown cottages—and as

we wend our way downwards we cast many a backward glance at the world of ice behind us.

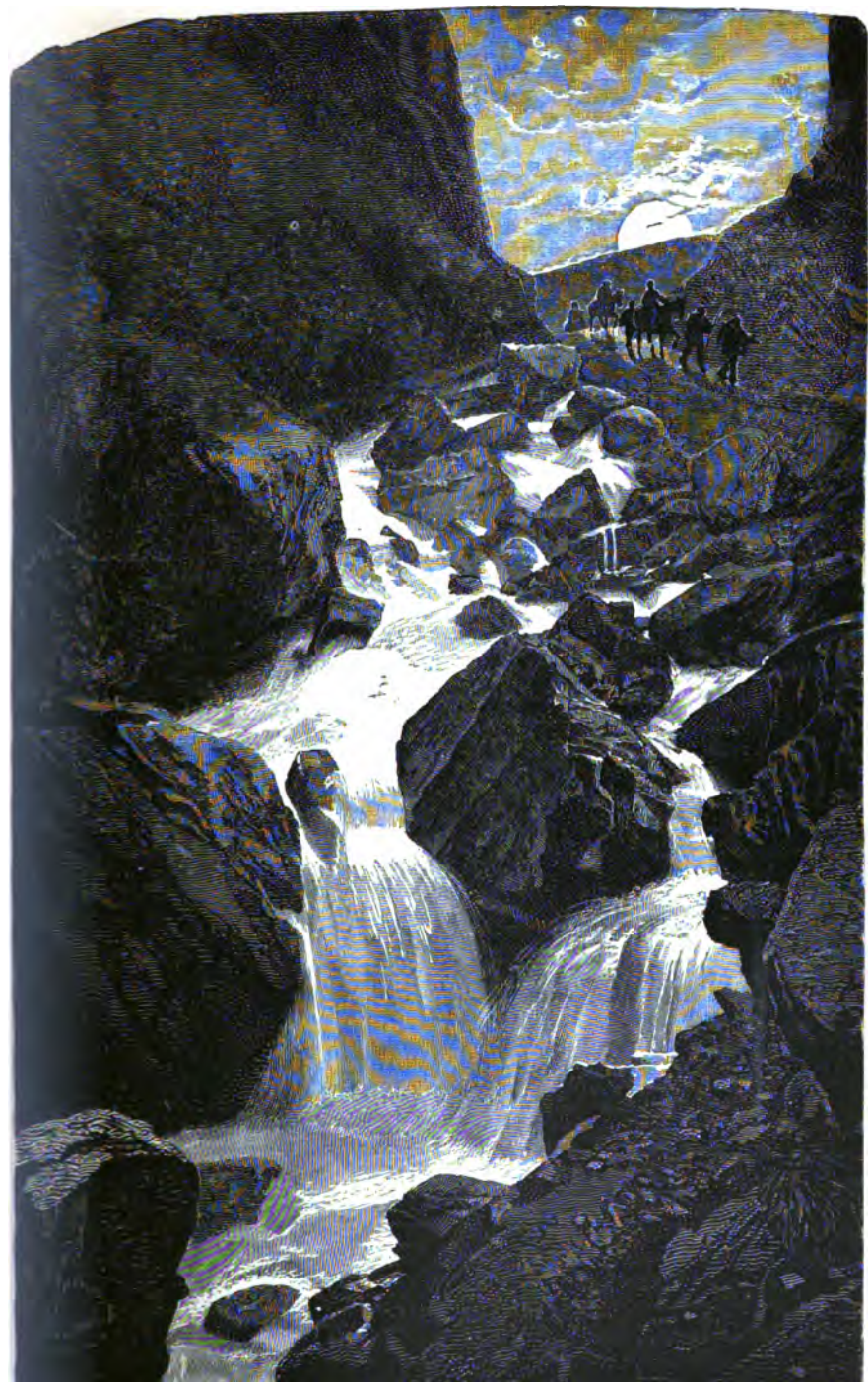
These villages—Täsch, Randa, St. Nicholas, and Stalden—some

of which are picturesque enough, are not adapted for halting-places; they are not externally attractive, and the paths are bad. The great questions which agitate the world never penetrate to this secluded valley, and the experiences of its inhabitants are usually limited to eating, drinking, labouring, and dying; indeed, it is a matter of constant marvel that the little village of Grächen, between St. Nicholas and Stalden, should have produced a man who actually became to a certain extent famous. Every one knows the strange history of Thomas Platter, a genuine son of the sixteenth century, who, though only a poor goatherd and apprenticed to a rope-maker, was inflamed from early youth with an ardent enthusiasm for classical learning. As a boy, bare-footed and half starved, he would hide himself among the hemp to read his Pindar and Homer leaf by leaf. He went as a journeyman to Basel, where he became one of the most respected citizens, taught Greek and Hebrew, was made superintendent of the gymnasium, and was warmly in favour of the Reformation, though he never went to any passionate lengths in his advocacy of its principles. He attained the age of eighty-three, and his grandfather lived to be a hundred and twenty-six; whence it seems that the air of the valley of the Visp must be particularly conducive to longevity.

We shall not be much struck by the glacier of the Rhone if we visit it after the Aletsch glacier; but those who come to it direct from Lucerne and Altdorf, by way of Andermatt and the wildly beautiful Furca Pass, will be greatly delighted and surprised by the deep cerulean blue of the great jagged masses of ice which they will suddenly see on their right hand—so close that they

can almost touch them—as they pursue their way down the steep high-road into the upper valley of the Rhone. This glacier is distinguished for the purity of its ice and the beauty of its colour; and, in spite of all rivals, it is one of the most famous sights of Switzerland. To the man of science it is something more than this, for, being the best and longest known of all the glaciers, it has contributed greatly to the solution of various geological problems.

Travellers coming from the north who prefer to plunge at once in *medias res*, instead of beginning at the beginning of the Rhone valley, may come from lovely Thun through the rich and beautiful valley of Kanderthal, and may drive comfortably in their carriages through the Kandergrund to Kandersteg, where the valley comes to an end and the great wide world of mountains rears its formidable 'horns' before them. Here is the famous Gemmi Pass, the threshold both of the Bernese Oberland and the Rhone valley. A very beautiful mountain-path leads up from Kandersteg to the desolate region on the summit of the pass, and takes the traveller past the inn of Schwarenbach, which has acquired some notoriety as being the place chosen by Werner as the scene of a very gloomy tragedy. Farther on the path winds along the margin of the melancholy little lake of Dauben, which is three-quarters of a mile long and about half a mile broad, and is frozen nearly ten months of the year. Its waters are dull and lifeless, and the dreary waste around, unenlivened by anything more cheerful than the bleating of sheep and the croaking of jackdaws, is very dismal. Suddenly, however, as we pursue our way, a splendid



panorama is unfolded before us. We are standing on the brink of a stupendous precipice, and immediately below us, at a giddy depth, we see the baths of Leuk, and a little lower down a bit of the valley of the Rhone. Dumas says that when he reached this point, and looked into the depths below, the sight so overpowered him that he sank to the ground unconscious; and while he was making the descent his teeth chattered to such a degree that he was obliged to stuff his pocket-handker-

chief into his mouth; when he reached the bottom the said handkerchief looked as if it had been cut through and through with a razor.

Dumas' experiences, however, are, we believe, peculiar to himself, and have not, so far as we are aware, been shared by any, even the most nervous of lady travellers. The descent to Letk is extremely interesting, but before we enter upon it we will take advantage of our elevated point of view to wave our farewells to the whole canton of Valais.

CHAPTER XVIII. ITALIAN SWITZERLAND—FROM THE LAKES TO THE ST. GOTTHARD.

BETWEEN the glaciers of the High Alps and the sunny plain of Lombardy, bounded on the east by the vale of the Adda, and on the west by that of the Doire, lies the lake district of Italy—a region of light and sunshine, endowed with all the charms that captivate the eye and rejoice the heart—a veritable garden, where the products of the chilly north and the luxuriant south meet and flourish equally.

Into this fertile region stretches the southern part of the Swiss canton of Tessin, or Ticino, which lies between the Lago Maggiore and the Lago di Como, and almost encloses the Lake of Lugano. Here the oppressive relaxing heat of the Lombard plain becomes more temperate, though the sunshine loses nothing of its brilliancy, and its fertilising powers seem to be doubled. Umbrageous woods of deciduous trees clothe all the hills and mountains, while the slopes are covered with nut-trees, chestnuts, and vine-clad mulberry-trees; the fields and meadows show signs of exuberant fertility, and the gardens are bright with the rosy blossoms of

the peach and almond in the spring-time, and yield an abundant supply of golden-hued figs in the summer. Such are the characteristics of the southern part of the canton, which extends to and includes Locarno, on the Lake of Maggiore, and Bellinzona, on the river Ticino. Beyond these places the country soon begins to assume a less genial aspect, and we enter upon the Alpine district of Ticino, with its precipitous heights, wild waterfalls, and frequent glimpses of glaciers. Southern vegetation and Italian-looking towns and villages are left behind; Nature becomes more chary of her gifts, or refuses to bestow them at all, except as the reward of laborious toil; poverty is rampant, and the people are generally too indolent to cope vigorously with it.

The canton takes its name from the river Tessin, or Ticino, the Ticinus of the ancients; but the part of the river between Bellinzona and the mouth of the Val Blegno is called the Riviera, and it is along the Riviera that the population of the canton is chiefly settled.

The world-renowned road of the St. Gotthard runs along by the side of the Ticino through a valley which abounds in gorges, wild-looking rocks, waterfalls, and the most picturesque and beautiful scenery. This is probably all that the summer tourist will see of the northern portion of the canton, as the Val Maggio, a valley which lies parallel with the Val Ticino on the west, is seldom visited. To most persons the canton of Ticino means the St. Gotthard Pass, Airolo, Faido, Biasca, Bellinzona, Locarno, and Lugano; and when they have seen these, they have seen the principal places of interest.

From the terrace of the church of St. Lawrence, which is situated on an eminence above the town, there is a fine view of the lake. The most conspicuous object on our left hand is Monte Brè, which rises to the north-east of Lugano, and is backed by the loftier Monte Boglia; the lake winds round its base to Porlezza. Opposite us, the foreground is occupied by Monte Caprino, whose cool grottoes are used as wine-cellars by the townspeople; its slopes are covered with lime-trees and young chestnuts, and behind it rises the Colmo di Creccio, while farther off still we can just catch the twin summits of the Monte Generoso. To the right is the famous cone-shaped mountain of San Salvatore, from the top of which the view is equally lovely and far more extensive. San Salvatore stands on a sort of peninsula; for the lake, after running south as far as Morcote, turns sharp round to the north, and proceeds in this direction as far as Agno, which is almost in a line with Lugano; and between these two towns lies the little Lake of Muzzano.

This Lago di Lugano, or Lago Ceresio, as the Luganesi them-

selves call it, seems to be always smiling at the sky. The sky is almost always blue, and so is the water; and the white sails of the fishing-boats which glide over its surface scarcely disturb its dream-like repose. Its shores are fanned by the most delicious breezes, and if the chilly *tramontana* prevails at night, its place is taken by the softly breathing *brega* in the daytime. Generally speaking, the climate is temperate, and the rude stormy winds known as the *porzellina* and *marino* seldom blow. It is no wonder that those whose chief object is to enjoy themselves quietly and without much exertion should love to linger on the shores of this lake, for its charms are numerous and varied, and the Hôtel du Parc, formerly a convent, which stands close to the water's edge, and is surrounded by trees, is a very pleasant place for a protracted sojourn. Visitors are constantly to be seen sitting in the balconies, and are apparently never weary of gazing out over the sparkling waters at the blue mountains in the distance. Others take one of the hotel-boats and row across the lake, sometimes to a villa or tiny village, sometimes to some of the beautiful gardens and groves which fringe its margin, and sometimes to the celebrated wine-cellars of Monte Caprino. Those who are of a more restless turn of mind will find plenty of longer excursions to satisfy them: the steamers Ceresio and Generoso will lend them the aid of their wings, and the railway will convey them, in the shortest possible space of time, either into Italy or to Melide, Maroggia, Capolago, or to Mendrisio, the garden of Italian Switzerland, which lies on the high-road to Como and Milan. Besides all this, they may, if they please, make the ascent of Monte Generoso, or Gionzero, the Rigi

of Italian Switzerland, which is daily becoming more famous. The people of Lugano have a saying with regard to this mountain, which runs as follows: 'Senseless is he who does not desire to see it, and senseless is he who, having seen, does not admire it; more senseless still is the man who, having seen and admired it, goes away and leaves it.' But there is a great deal closer at hand which is well worthy of a visit, and within easy walking, riding, or driving distance; in fact, the attractions of the neighbourhood are simply inexhaustible, and people who go hence to Locarno often think regretfully of the paradise they have left behind them on the Ceresio.

Yet Locarno is situated on the Lago Maggiore, and all our ideas as to the beauty of Italian scenery are commonly associated with the name of this lake. And it must be confessed that Locarno is beautiful; but we miss the fresh honest air and delightful climate of Lugano, where the warm breath of the south wind is so deliciously tempered by breezes blowing straight down from the Alps. Locarno is like a snake lurking amid the roses and fruits, which grow here in such rich profusion as to remind one of the garden of the Hesperides. Nowhere do trees of all descriptions grow more luxuriantly than on the Locarno shore, but the entire locality is a prey to the malaria, which is bred in the extensive marshes of the Ticino, and spreads its leaden wings over the whole northern shore of the lake. Can it be owing to the malaria that the town of Locarno has always hitherto seemed to be in a state of retrogression?

It is hard to turn one's back on all the glorious beauty of Italy; but we have to wend our way homewards, and must therefore

turn our steps towards Bellinzona, where the canton of Ticino ceases to be Italian for those coming from the south, and begins to be Italian for those arriving by the St. Gotthard road.

Bellinzona itself is a thoroughly Italian town, and its aspect is grand and striking as we look down upon it from the slopes of Monte Cenere and see it standing on the banks of the broad Ticino, in the midst of the most beautiful and garden-like scenery. The extensive valley in which it is situated was anciently known as the Campi Canini. Its battlemented walls and the three old castles, known respectively as the Castle of Uri, or Castello Grande, the Castello di Svitto, and the Castle of Unterwalden, give the place almost an air of defiance when viewed from a distance; but this disappears speedily upon a closer and more intimate acquaintance. Indeed, the town resembles some old statue overgrown with roses and creepers, round which the children laugh and play and gather flowers, without bestowing a thought upon their ancient ancestor. There is nothing in Bellinzona to inspire fear or awe nowadays. The sound of the war trumpet has given place to the song of the herdsman and the ritornello of the street-boy, and the cicada hums its summer song in profoundest peace where once the clash of arms was frequently to be heard. There are many beautiful views to be seen from the neighbouring vineyards, which are reached by shady paths through groves and thickets. On the cliffs of Corvaro, overshadowed by trees, stands a lonely little church dedicated to the Madonna, which contains a whole world of poetry within its four walls. There are a few villages and a good many scattered houses upon these



BELLINZONA.

heights, and if we desire to become better acquainted with the people and their manners and customs, we shall have a good opportunity of doing so here. And now we proceed still farther north, and along the Riviera, or Revierthal, as the Italians and Germans respectively call the valley of the Ticino. Between Bellinzona and Biasca the Italian echoes grow fainter and fainter; but the roads are still bordered by vineyards, and the granite pillars which support the trellised vines, as well as the peach, almond, and fig trees, still occasionally remind us of the south. These, however, are presently succeeded by nut-trees, cherry-trees, alders growing by the water-side, and plantations of pines on the mountains; and by the time we reach Biasca the snowy mountains are once more towering over our heads. The streams, too, become more voluminous and impetuous, the Frodabach forms a considerable waterfall—and, in fact, it was the rocks and floods together which wrought such terrible havoc here in 1512. It was a wealthy and prosperous district then, thanks to the German part of the population; but it is so no longer, and the numerous villages along the road and upon the heights are best seen from a distance. If one goes too near, one finds that they are dismal dens, with extraordinarily narrow streets, and full of filthy puddles; and the few stone houses they contain look slovenly and ill-kept for the most part. The wooden houses are small and ugly—the front being of wood and the back of stone, and the roof covered with shingle. The first-floor is reached by an outside staircase, which leads at once into the kitchen, and this again into the small low living-room, whence almost all air and light are ex-

cluded. These dwellings are unbearably hot in the summer, and in winter they are stifling; for the whole family eat, drink, sleep, and work in this confined space, and the window is never opened. There is little that is attractive about these villages, though vanity has induced them to embellish, to a certain extent, that side which they turn towards the road; yet even here the evidences of Italian frivolity are too marked to be mistaken.

We are now in the Val Leventina, a valley which extends from the junction of the Brenno and Ticino, at Biasca, up to the St. Gotthard, and is enlivened by the river Ticino with its companions, as well as by the great St. Gotthard road. It contains about twenty villages, and is generally divided into three districts, known respectively as the Upper, Middle, and Lower Valley; the boundary of the Upper Valley being marked by Airolo and Quinto, that of the others by Faido and Giornico. The valley, taken as a whole, is by no means the abode of wealth, and when the traffic along the St. Gotthard road does not afford them sufficient employment, the men usually go and seek their fortunes abroad. The women work in the fields and meadows, or sit in their dismal little rooms weaving; but a good many of them follow the example of the men, and leave their homes for foreign lands. Whether the future will improve matters is a question; for the railway, when it comes, will only hurry travellers through the valley faster than they go at present, and the inhabitants will have nothing to do but to gaze after them. If the future has nothing good in store for them, the past has certainly left them little but sorrowful memories; and even the grand natural memorial of the

'Sassi Grossi' (Great Rocks) at Giornico, which commemorates a victory gained over their enemies, reminds them at the same time that this very victory only helped to strengthen the hands of their subsequent oppressors, the cow-herds of Uri. The people of the Val Leventina were at war just then with Milan; and Count Marsiglio Torello, who had been sent against them at the head of fifteen thousand men, a large body of cavalry, and a good deal of artillery, had advanced as far as the bridge of Biasca. There he found a number of the peasants awaiting him; but they made a feint of retreating when he approached, and drew him on to the flat ground between Bodio and Giornico, where Stanga, their captain, had made every preparation for the reception of the ducal troops. This part of the valley had been purposely laid under water, and, as it was now the month of November, one night's sharp frost was sufficient to convert the whole surface into a sheet of hard ice. The dalesmen, only a few hundred in number, took up a position on the cliffs above, and as the troops approached, they first rolled huge masses of rocks down upon them from the slopes, and then charged furiously upon them. An utter rout ensued; several thousands of the enemy were slain, their guns and arms fell into the hands of the victors, and they fled down the Riviera in dire confusion, pursued by the Ticinesi, who took a great number of them prisoners. The men of the Val Leventina distinguished themselves greatly on this occasion, and Stanga, their captain, returned home, when the fight was over, only to die on the threshold of the numerous wounds he had received.

At Faido there are a number of

beautiful old chestnut-trees, which remind us that there is another side to the picture we have just drawn. It must be confessed, indeed, that the unfortunate valley was most haughtily treated by its masters, the men of Uri. In all their intercourse with these latter, the dalesmen were required to address them as '*Illustriissimi e potentissimi signori e padroni nostri clementissimi*'—'Most illustrious and most mighty lords, and our most merciful masters,' while they dared not speak of themselves except as '*Umilissimi e fedelissimi servitori e sudditi*'—'Most humble and faithful servants and subjects.'

Such being the state of things, but little was needed to kindle the smouldering flames of insurrection, and in 1755 a premature attempt was made to shake off the Swiss yoke. It failed, however, for want of proper management, and the men of Uri and their confederates, who had come across the St. Gotthard Pass, quickly crushed the rebellion. The people of the Val Leventina were summoned to appear at Faido on the 2d of June, and they came, three thousand of them, with shame for the past and fear for the future in their faces. They were surrounded by the Confederate troops, and compelled, bare-headed and on bended knees, to swear unconditional obedience to their masters; and in the same posture they were made to witness the execution of their leaders, who were hanged on the very chestnut-trees we see before us. Horror-stricken and sad at heart, the dalesmen returned to their miserable huts, to find themselves in a state of worse bondage than before.

There is something gloomy and dismal about the face of the whole country here. It looks as if there were a curse upon it; and the peo-

ple themselves are grave and silent, as is only natural in those who are the heirs of such a dreary past, and have grown up in perpetual conflict with the powers of Nature.

Above Faïdo the Ticino rushes with demoniacal fury through a narrow passage, which it forced for itself ages ago in the Monte Piottino or Platifer. To describe its mad raging impetuosity is simply impossible, for it is unlike anything else. The road is carried along close above the boiling waters, which will be spanned by a railway-bridge before long.

And now the scenery becomes grander and wilder every step we take forward, and the cliffs advance nearer and nearer, threatening to bar the traveller's farther progress. We pass the poor little hamlet of Piotta, which lies on a mountain-slope close to a wild-looking ravine on the other side of the road; then we reach Airolo, at the entrance of the Val Tremola—or Trümmelthal, as the Germans call it—and then the real ascent to the St. Gotthard begins. The great St. Gotthard tunnel will terminate at Airolo, and this gigantic work has greatly contributed to the prosperity of the village for years past.

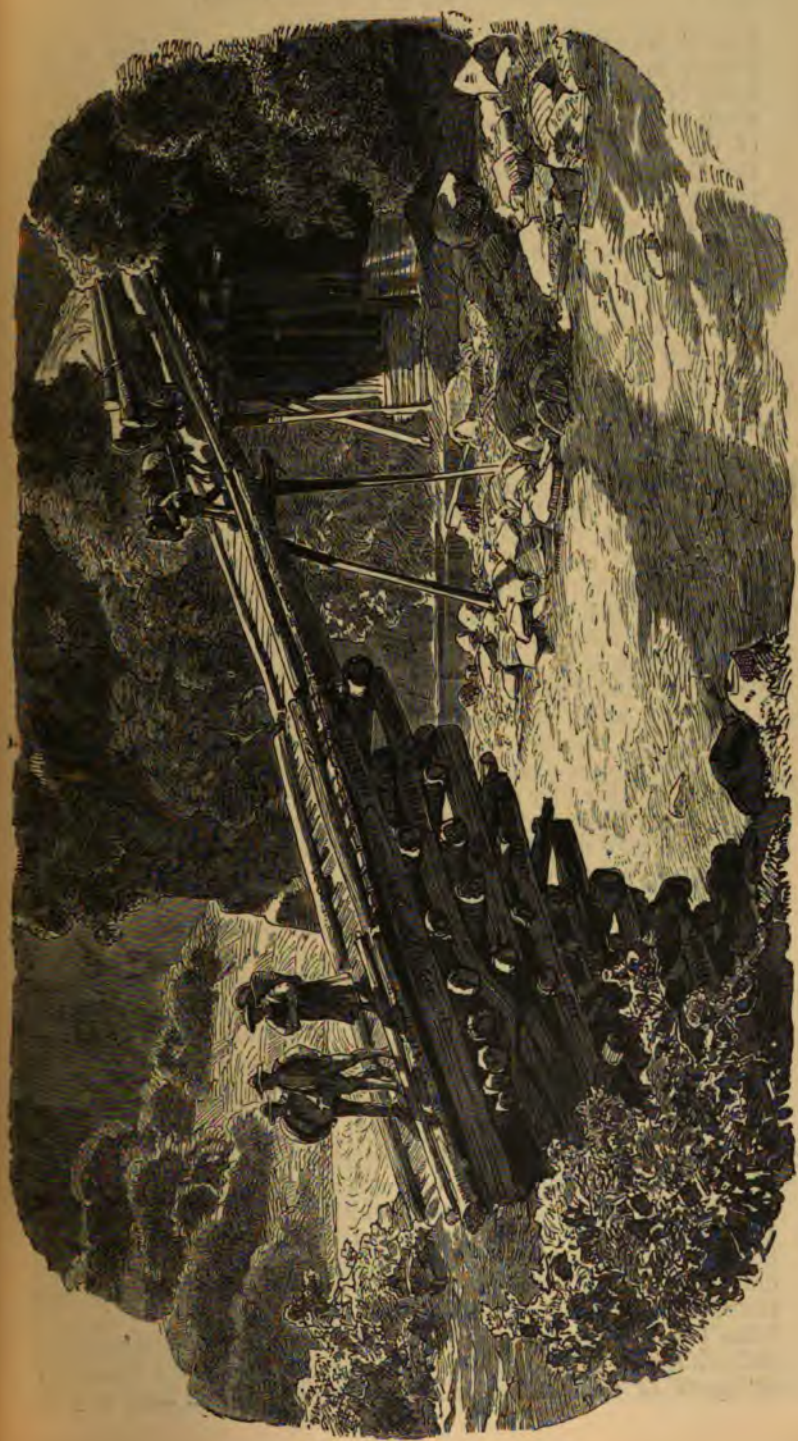
The Italian element is very strong in Airolo; and one fancies that the stream of intending emigrants who proposed to cross the Alps at this point were suddenly arrested by finding that they might make money here without going any farther. It is here that the corkscrew windings of the St. Gotthard road begin, and from here to Hospenthal, in the Vale of Urseren, the traveller has no opportunity of buying anything he may require on his journey, except at the humble hospice. Accordingly, there has always been a great demand here for

small wares of all sorts, and for porters, agents, stables, relays of horses, and taverns, as well as for such handicraftsmen as smiths, saddlers, and wheelwrights; and all these various needs are just what the Ticinese is capable of supplying. Airolo, therefore, was a very flourishing place even in the days when the only road across the St. Gotthard was but a bridle-path, and that a bad one; for sixteen thousand travellers and some ten thousand beasts of burden naturally required that some sort of provision should be made for their various needs. The great new road of course made many changes, however, and the new railway, when completed, will not have much to do with Airolo; so that one fears its present prosperity can be but short-lived, and must be doomed to gradual decay.

At Airolo the ascent begins in the pleasantest manner through rich green meadows; and the pedestrian, as he follows the short cuts made by the old road, can see the innumerable twists and turns of the newer and easier road, which looks at a distance like an uncoiled rope flung across the mountain, or, as Rogers says:

‘Like a silver zone
Flung about carelessly, it shines afar.
Catching the eye in many a broken link,
In many a turn and traverse as it glides.’

On fine bright days we enter even the Val Tremola, or Tremiora (the Vale of Trembling), without the least feeling of apprehension; though, when we have crossed the bridge which takes us once more to the right bank of the Ticino, we are close to Madonna ai Leit, San Giuseppe, St. Antonio, and il Buco dei Calanchetti, spots which are all of them in very ill repute for one reason or other. The last-mentioned, for instance, derives its name from a party of glaziers who all perished



BRIDGE OVER THE TICINO AT FAIDO.

here when on their way back from France to their homes in the valley of Calanca. They had insisted on leaving the safe shelter of the Hospice and continuing their journey, in spite of all the warnings given them, and were buried in the snow. All this part of the road, but even more that on the other side of the Hospice, is exposed in winter to frequent snowstorms, called *tourmentes* or *guzen* by the Swiss, and *kisses* by the people of the Val Leventina—kisses given by the fiend-like tramontana which too often end in death.

A very dreary region it is in the midst of which the Hospice stands—a cold, desolate, barren plateau, about three miles long, thickly covered with weather-beaten blocks of granite. As far as the eye can reach not a single speck of green is to be seen, for we are surrounded on all sides by a wall of steep snow-covered heights. The streams are arrested in their course, uncertain apparently whether they shall flow north or south, and accordingly here, as on most mountain-passes, they have formed various little ponds and lakes, which are abundantly fringed with flowers in the height of summer, but are otherwise entirely devoid of any signs of life, and are surrounded by nothing but broken rocks heaped together in the wildest confusion. The best known of these lakes are the Lago Sella and Lago Scuro, which are elevated some six thousand odd feet above the level of the Mediterranean. One of the principal feeders of the river Reuss forms the outlet of the Lago Sella, the Lago Scuro being drained by the wild torrent which rushes down the Val Tremola. Some twenty other lakes, larger and smaller, lie hidden in different parts of this dreary rock-

strewn wilderness. One of the larger and better known of these is the Lago Lucendro, which is fed by the waters of the Lucendro glacier and drained into the river Reuss. None of them are ever free from ice for more than three months of the year at the outside, and their appearance is in perfect harmony with the wild chill-looking landscape, which seems to be rendered only more gloomy and sad by the presence of these dull expanses of dead-looking blue-green water.

The most noteworthy peaks around—none of which, be it observed, bears the name of St. Gotthard—are the Pizzo Centrale, or Tritthorn, which is now often ascended, Monte Prosa, the Fibbia, Pizzo Lucendro, and Piz Orsino, none of which is quite ten thousand feet in height, though some come very near it, and all are considerably over eight thousand feet.

The history of the St. Gotthard Pass and its Hospice is long and interesting, though it does not go back as far as one might be led by its present world-wide fame to expect. Our first trustworthy information concerning it dates from the fourteenth century, and is furnished by the famous Father, Placido a Specha. In the records of the convent of Disentis, which were afterwards destroyed by fire, he had seen it mentioned that there was a hospice at the foot of the mountain in 1300, that merchandise was conveyed across the pass in 1321, and that in 1374 the abbot of the aforesaid convent—which at that time owned the alpine pastures of Fortunei, Rodunt, and Lucendro—had caused a hospice and chapel to be built on the summit of the pass. In 1431, when many of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the time were passing through on their way to



HOSPICE ON THE ST. GOTTHARD.

the council then being held at Basel, a certain Canon Ferrario was sent up to the hospice to attend to them. This was not for long, however; and later on, when the convent had handed over the pastures just mentioned to the village of Airolo, the same place was laid under an obligation to keep up the little institution on the mountain-pass.

St. Carlo Borromeo had intended to build a considerable house on the spot, but was prevented by death from carrying out his designs. In 1602 Friedrich Borromäus sent an ecclesiastic thither, and in 1629 he had a house built there, but this was deserted from 1648 to 1682. The hospice of the Capuchins was first established in 1683, through the instrumentality of Cardinal Visconti. A hundred years later it was destroyed by avalanches, was rebuilt and again destroyed—this time by the French, who lay encamped here from 1799 to 1800, and, to supply their want of fuel, burnt up all the woodwork the buildings contained. Money being scarce, a very humble little hospice for poor travellers was first erected, and this gradually developed into the present grand group of buildings.

Such has been the history of the pass in times of peace; but it has known something of war as well, and the date of the year 1799 is inscribed in its records in letters of flaming red, for at that time the pass was the scene of a des-

perate struggle between Russia, Austria, and France. However, this is all too well known to need repetition, and every traveller who has crossed the St. Gotthard knows the story attached to the inscription, 'Suwarow victor,' still to be read on the granite rocks at the upper end of the Val Trémola.

And now, without further delay, we must follow the downward course of the Reuss to the beautiful peaceful valley below, with its green undulating pastures and silvery river; with here the pleasant little village of Hospenthal and its characteristic ruin, and farther on the imposing village of Andermatt, overshadowed by its beautiful wood of pine-trees.

Here we may take our choice of two or three different routes. If we proceed through the tunnel known as the Uernerloch, or Hole of Uri, and across the Devil's Bridge, we shall find ourselves once more by the Lake of Lucerne, while the road to the west, over the Realp and Furca Pass, will in a few hours take us back to Valais; so we must strike out in a new direction, and make for the pass of the Oberalp. And who shall be our leader? Old 'Father Rhine' himself!—

'The wide and winding Rhine,
Whose breast of waters broadly swells
Between the banks which bear the vine,
And hills all rich with blossomed trees,
And fields which promise corn and wine,
And scattered cities crowning these,
Whose far white walls along them shine.'
Childe Harold.

(*To be continued.*)

THROUGH THE DARK CONTINENT.*

HONOURS have fallen thick upon the prematurely gray head of the man whom Sir Rutherford Alcock, speaking as the mouthpiece of the Royal Geographical Society, lately eulogised as 'not only one of the most daring and adventurous of explorers, but as one of the most intelligent and observant of geographers.' Europe, Africa, and America have flattered him with their distinctions, and the whole world has almost unanimously conspired to applaud him. Illustrious individuals and learned societies have handsomely intimated to him their appreciation of his services to science and civilisation. Kings, rulers, and princes have accorded him the meed of personal recognition; governments have officially approved of his achievements; and public favour has been nearly coextensive with his reputation. Nearly, but not altogether; for Mr. Stanley professes to know, to his bitter cost, that the rule of his conduct in Africa has not been understood by all. 'But,' to use his own words, 'with my conscience at ease, and the simple record of my daily actions, which I now publish, to speak for me, this misunderstanding on the part of a few presents itself to me only as one more harsh experience of life. And those who read my book will

know that I have indeed had "a sharp apprehension and keen intelligence" of many such experiences.'

Certainly, having regard to the paternal tenderness with which Mr. Stanley watched over the welfare of his followers, his accusers must in fairness do their best to acquit him of the charge of needless bloodshed or wanton aggression on the natives whose hostility, if he could not disarm, he was bound to combat as the only alternative to the curtailment of his expedition.

Through long ages Africa has been emphatically a 'dark continent:' dark in the sable complexion of its inhabitants, in the degradation of its social systems, the grovelling fear of its superstitions, the cruel savagery of its religions; dark in the deadly inhospitality of its climate, in the dreariness of its deserts, in the ferocity of its beasts of prey and the huge terror of its reptiles; and dark, finally, in the depths of its unexplored strangeness. Yet in many respects its darkness is beginning to disperse; and our author is one of the last of African travellers to whose work such a title as he has given to the stirring volumes before us will not be a misnomer. Already the golden threads of ascertained routes are to be recognised through the retreating gloom; and in centres of varied activity the pioneers of trade and the preachers of Christianity are severally or conjointly labouring, under the auspices of many of the states

* *Through the Dark Continent; or the Sources of the Nile, around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa, and down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean.* By Henry M. Stanley, author of 'How I found Livingstone,' 'Coomassie and Magdala,' 'My Kalulu,' &c. 2 vols. (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, & Riving-

of Europe, in the task of redeeming what, from the time of Herodotus, has been a land of mystery and the shadow of death, to the light of a sublimer faith, the trust of a larger hope, and the life of a quickened commerce, of more merciful government and more genial institutions.

The European *personnel* of Mr. Stanley's expedition was limited to three, Frederick Barker, Francis John Pocock, and Edward Pocock, —all of whose names have now to be inscribed on the roll of martyrs to African exploration, two of them having perished of fever, and the third, Frank Pocock, having fallen a victim to his rash confidence in the tender mercies of the 'whirling flying waters' of the falls of Massassa. Barker was a clerk at the Langham Hotel, whose resolute determination to go to Africa was not to be shaken by Mr. Stanley's adverse and faithful representations; and the Pococks, two adventurous lads of eager courage and devotion, were sons of a worthy fisherman of Lower Upnor, Kent, whose knowledge of river navigation, as practised by the watermen of the Medway and the Thames, was likely to be suggestive of resources on the streams and broader waters of Equatorial Africa.

It was not for want of enterprise on the part of other candidates that Mr. Stanley's civilised companionship was thus circumscribed; for he pleasantly states that,

"Soon after the announcement of the "New Mission," applications by the score poured into the offices of the *Daily Telegraph* and *New York Herald* for employment. Before I sailed from England over 1200 letters were received from "generals," "colonels," "captains," "lieutenants," "midshipmen," "engineers," "commissioners of hotels," "mechanics, waiters, cooks, servants, somebodies and nobodies, spiritual mediums and magnetisers, &c. &c. They all knew Africa, were perfectly

acclimatised, were quite sure they would please me, would do important services, save me from any number of troubles by their ingenuity and resources, take me up in balloons or by flying carriages, make us all invisible by their magic arts, or by the "science of magnetism" would cause all savages to fall asleep while we might pass anywhere without trouble. Indeed I feel sure that, had enough money been at my disposal at that time, I might have led 5000 Englishmen, 5000 Americans, 2000 Frenchmen, 2000 Germans, 500 Italians, 250 Swiss, 200 Belgians, 50 Spaniards, and 5 Greeks, or 15,005 Europeans, to Africa. But the time had not arrived to depopulate Europe, and colonise Africa on such a scale, and I was compelled to respectfully decline accepting the valuable services of the applicants, and to content myself with Francis John and Edward Pocock, and Frederick Barker, whose entreaties had been seconded by his mother on my return from America.

I was agreeably surprised also, before departure, at the great number of friends I possessed in England, who testified their friendship substantially by presenting me with useful "tokens of their regard" in the shape of canteens, watches, water-bottles, pipes, pistols, knives, pocket companions, manifold writers, cigars, packages of medicine, Bibles, prayer-books, English tracts for the dissemination of religious knowledge among the black pagans, poems, tiny silk banners, gold rings, &c. &c. A lady for whom I have a reverent respect presented me also with a magnificent prize mastiff named "Castor," an English officer presented me with another, and at the Dogs' Home at Battersea I purchased a retriever, a bull-dog, and a bull-terrier, called respectively by the Pococks "Nero," "Bull," and "Jack."

When, however, Mr. Stanley set out from Bagamoyo for the interior on the 17th of November 1874, his following comprised some 356 souls, consisting, besides Europeans and gun-bearers, of 20 chiefs, 12 guides, 270 porters, 36 women, and 10 boys, children of some of the chiefs and boat-bearers, following their mothers and assisting them with trifling loads of utensils. Of these, forming, as they left the coast opposite Zanzibar, a lengthy line which occupied nearly half a mile of the path which is at the present day the commercial and exploring highway into the lake regions, 108—men, women, and children

—returned with Mr. Stanley to Zanzibar in November 1877, including tiny infants, who, in the course of the expedition, had been 'ushered into the world amid the dismal and tragic scenes of the cataract lands.' Including the three Europeans, no fewer than 173 members of the 'Anglo-American Expedition' succumbed to the chances and disasters of inter-tropical pilgrimage. The casualties were represented by being lost in the jungle, lost through insanity, death from childbirth, from smoking *cannabis sativa* or wild hemp, from typhoid fever and African fever, and from being caught by a crocodile, one each; infantile debility, heart-disease, low fever, general debility, clear scurvy, ulcers, and overdoses of opium, were fatal to two each; five were arrested by natives and condemned for stealing; nine perished of starvation; fourteen were drowned; twenty-one died of dysentery, and forty-five of small-pox; and fifty-eight were either slain in battle, killed in the bush, or otherwise murdered. It is not for nothing, therefore, that Mr. Stanley, speaking with reference to the distinctions of which he has lately been the recipient, should interrupt his self-gratulation with a short paragraph for the relief of his feelings and in lamentation and praise of the dead.

'Alas, that to share this pride and these honours there are left to me none of those gallant young Englishmen who started from this country to cross the Dark Continent, and who endeared themselves to me by their fidelity and affection! Alas, that to enjoy the exceeding pleasure of rest among friends, after months of fighting for dear life among cannibals and cataracts, there are left so few of those brave Africans to whom, as the willing hands and the loyal hearts of the expedition, so much of its success was due!'

The task to which Mr. Stanley addressed himself was the solution of the several geographical prob-

lems left by his gallant predecessors in African travel; to supplement the incomplete discoveries of Burton and Speke, Speke and Grant, and Dr. Livingstone. In the course of his researches he circumnavigated the Victoria Nyanza, from the north-western shore of which he penetrated to Beatrice Gulf, the broad north-eastern arm of the lake Muta N'zigé, from whence partially returning he arrived by a circuitous southerly route at Ujiji, on Lake Tanganika, the shores of which he explored before attempting that wonderful voyage down the Congo—hereafter, if his wish is to be recognised by geographers, to be known as the Livingstone River—upon which it has been said that his fame as a geographical pioneer will substantially depend. Of this 'comprehensive exploration, lasting, from sea to sea, two years eight months and twenty days,' the results are to be found embodied in the two volumes before us, which are rendered as intelligible as splendid and minute maps and plentiful illustrations can make them. With the principal events and the general lines of Mr. Stanley's expedition the world has been made from time to time familiar by means of the letters published in the columns of an enterprising contemporary; and the bare itinerary of so stupendous an excursion would more than exhaust the space we have at our disposal. We propose, therefore, to select from his narrative some of those passages and descriptions which are conversant about the more salient events of his journey, and which throw light upon the character of the rulers and the peoples of the different regions he visited, as well as upon the physical features of the country wherein they dwell.

Those of our readers who remember the high-bred and dignified courtesy of the Sultan of Zanzibar, Barghash bin Sayid, during his visit to England three years ago, will be glad to have their reminiscences of him refreshed by the justly favourable tribute to his loyalty and philanthropy placed on record by Mr. Stanley.

'It is impossible not to feel a kindly interest in Prince Barghash, and to wish him complete success in the reforms he is now striving to bring about in his country. Here we see an Arab prince, educated in the strictest school of Islam, and accustomed to regard the black natives of Africa as the lawful prey of conquest or lust, and fair objects of barter, suddenly turning round at the request of European philanthropists and becoming one of the most active opponents of the slave-trade—and the spectacle must necessarily create for him many well-wishers and friends.

Though Prince Barghash has attributed to myself the visit of those ships of war under Admiral Cumming, all who remember that period, and are able, therefore, to trace events, will not fail to perceive that the first decided steps taken by the British Government for the suppression of the slave-trade on the east coast of Africa were due to the influence of Livingstone's constant appeals. Some of his letters, they will remember, were carried by me to England, and the sensation caused by them was such as to compel the British Government to send Sir Bartle Frere in the *Enchantress*, as a special envoy to Zanzibar, to conclude a treaty with Prince Barghash. When the Prince's reluctance to sign became known, the fleet under Admiral Cumming made its appearance before Zanzibar, and by a process of gentle coercion, or rather quiet demonstration, the signature of the Prince was at last obtained. One thing more, however, still remained to be done before the treaty could be carried into full effect, and that was to eradicate any feeling of discontent or sullenness from his mind which might have been created by the exhibition of force, and this, I was happy to see, was effected by the hospitable reception he enjoyed in England in 1876. There was a difference in the manner and tone of the Sultan of 1874 and of 1877, that I can only attribute to the greater knowledge he had gained of the grandeur of the power which he had so nearly provoked. We must look upon him now as a friendly and, I believe, sincere ally, and as a man willing to do his utmost for the suppression of the slave-trade.'

After a series of adventures which almost pall on the reader

from the very wealth and surprises of their variety, Mr. Stanley found himself, early in April 1875, the honoured guest of Mtesa, Kabaka, or Emperor of Uganda, the 'foremost man of Equatorial Africa.'

'In person Mtesa is tall, probably 6 feet 1 inch, and slender. He has very intelligent and agreeable features, reminding me of some of the faces of the great stone images at Thebes, and of the statues in the museum at Cairo. He has the same fulness of lips, but their grossness is relieved by the general expression of amiability blended with dignity that pervades his face, and the large, lustrous, lambent eyes that lend it a strange beauty, and are typical of the race from which I believe him to have sprung. His colour is of a dark red brown, of a wonderfully smooth surface. When not engaged in council, he throws off unreservedly the bearing that characterises him when on the throne, and gives rein to his humour, indulging in hearty peals of laughter. He seems to be interested in the discussion of the manners and customs of European courts, and to be enamoured of hearing of the wonders of civilisation. He is ambitious to imitate as much as lies in his power the ways of the white man. When any piece of information is given him, he takes upon himself the task of translating it to his wives and chiefs, though many of the latter understand the Swahili language as well he does himself.

I see that Mtesa is a powerful Emperor, with great influence over his neighbours. I have to-day seen the turbulent Manikorongo, king of Usui and Mirambo, that terrible phantom who disturbs men's minds in Unyamwezi through their embassies kneeling and tendering their tribute to him. I saw over 3000 soldiers of Mtesa nearly half civilised. I saw about a hundred chiefs who might be classed in the same scale as the men of Zanzibar and Oman, clad in as rich robes, and armed in the same fashion, and have witnessed with astonishment such order and law as is obtainable in semi-civilised countries. All this is the result of a poor Muslim's labour, his name is Muley bin Salim. He it was who first began teaching here the doctrines of Islam. False and contemptible as these doctrines are, they are preferable to the ruthless instincts of a savage despot, whom Speke and Grant left wallowing in the blood of women, and I honour the memory of Muley bin Salim—Muslim and slave-trader though he be—the poor priest who has wrought this happy change. With a strong desire to improve still more the character of Mtesa, I shall begin building on the foundation stones laid by Muley bin Salim. I shall destroy his belief in Islam, and teach the doctrines of Jesus of Nazareth.'

Mr. Stanley presents the following picture of his methods as a missionary; and the sketch is quaintly reminiscent of the *bon-homie* of the evangelistic efforts of Defoe's great Christian hero and vagabond, 'Robinson Crusoe':

'Since the 5th April, I had enjoyed ten interviews with Mtesa, and during all I had taken occasion to introduce topics which would lead up to the subject of Christianity. Nothing occurred in my presence but I contrived to turn it towards effecting that which had become an object to me, viz. his conversion. There was no attempt made to confuse him with the details of any particular doctrine. I simply drew for him the image of the Son of God humbling Himself for the good of all mankind, white and black, and told him how, while He was in man's disguise, He was seized and crucified by wicked people who scorned His divinity, and yet out of His great love for them, while yet suffering on the cross, He asked His great Father to forgive them. I showed the difference in character between Him whom white men love and adore, and Mohammed, whom the Arabs revere; how Jesus endeavoured to teach mankind that we should love all men, excepting none, while Mohammed taught his followers that the slaying of the pagan and the unbeliever was an act that merited Paradise. I left it to Mtesa and his chiefs to decide which was the worthier character. I also sketched in brief the history of religious belief from Adam to Mohammed. I had also begun to translate to him the Ten Commandments, and Idi, the Emperor's writer, transcribed in Kiganda the words of the Law as given to him in choice Swahili by Robert Feruzi, one of my boat's crew, and a pupil of the Universities Mission at Zanzibar.

The enthusiasm with which I launched into this work of teaching was soon communicated to Mtesa and some of his principal chiefs, who became so absorbingly interested in the story as I gave it to them, that little of other business was done. The political burzah and seat of justice had now become an alcove, where only the moral and religious laws were discussed.'

In another place Mr. Stanley is good enough to supply us with his idea of the principles by which the activity of Christian missionaries amongst inferior races should be governed or modified:

'It is strange how British philanthropists, clerical and lay, persist in the delusion that the Africans can be satisfied with spiritual improvement only. They should endeavour to impress themselves

with the undeniable fact that man, white, yellow, red, or black, has also material wants which crave to be understood and supplied. A barbarous man is a pure materialist. He is full of cravings for possessing something that he cannot describe. He is like a child which has not yet acquired the faculty of articulation. The missionary discovers the barbarian almost stupefied with brutish ignorance, with the instincts of a man in him, but yet living the life of a beast. Instead of attempting to develop the qualities of this practical human being, he instantly attempts his transformation by expounding to him the dogmas of the Christian faith, the doctrine of transubstantiation and other difficult subjects, before the barbarian has had time to articulate his necessities and to explain to him that he is a frail creature requiring to be fed with bread, and not with a stone.

My experience and study of the pagan prove to me, however, that, if the missionary can show the poor materialist that religion is allied with substantial benefits and improvement of his degraded condition, the task to which he is about to devote himself will be rendered comparatively easy. For the African once brought in contact with the European becomes docile enough: he is awed by a consciousness of his own immense inferiority, and imbued with a vague hope that he may also rise in time to the level of this superior being who has so challenged his admiration. It is the story of Caliban and Stephano over again. He comes to him with a desire to be taught, and, seized with an ambition to aspire to a higher life, becomes docile and tractable; but to his surprise he perceives himself mocked by this being who talks to him about matters that he despairs of ever understanding, and therefore, with abashed face and a still deeper sense of his inferiority, he retires to his den, cavern, or hut with a dogged determination to be contented with the brutish life he was born in.'

Mr. Stanley's propaganda, so far as the 'Emperor' Mtesa was the object of it, was ably seconded by Colonel Linant de Bellefonds, a Frenchman and Calvinist, who, as a member of the 'Gordon Pasha Expedition,' opportunely arrived at the court of Mtesa during the first sojourn there of Mr. Stanley. The latter, indeed, had repaired to Uganda in the Lady Alice—which had been built in sections at Teddington, and put together for the navigation of the Victoria Nyanza, and other operations of the expedition

which could be conducted on inland waters—with a crew of ten men, leaving Barker and Frank Pocock encamped with the rest of his following at Kagehyi, on the southern shore of Speke Gulf, the south-eastern arm of the magnificent Victoria. Mtesa had promised a fleet of canoes to bring back all the expedition to his territories, whence it was proposed to march for the exploration of the Albert Nyanza, and the determination of its exact relation to the Nile system. But the vain-glorious defection of Mtesa's admiral betrayed Mr. Stanley into the power of savages, and especially into the hands of the ruthless islanders of Bumbireh, from whom he effected a sudden splendid escape, only to find himself foodless and without oars on the lake, and the object of the mocking taunt of the Bumbireh people to 'go and die on the Nyanza.' In spite of this parting malediction, which was hereafter to be avenged in a way that to some good people has seemed too sanguinary for an amateur missionary, the Lady Alice, after several picturesque vicissitudes, found herself once more sailing along the sunlit waters of Speke Gulf, and bearing the announcement of the successful circumnavigation of the lake, one of the first great objects of the expedition. Meanwhile sickness, death, and treachery had been at work in the stationary camp. Twelve days before Mr. Stanley's return, Frederick Barker had succumbed to fever; disease of various kinds daily claimed its victims; and the expedition was in danger of robbery and extinction from the secret confederation of conspiring chiefs. At this juncture of affairs, Lukongeh, the youthful king of Ukerewé, came to the rescue; and his timely friendship gave Mr. Stanley, borne

down with fever and anxiety, the canoes he required to assume once more a northerly course over the waters of Lake Victoria.

The subjects and the neighbours of King Lukongeh are considerably devoted to the marvellous:

'The stories current in this country about the witchcraft practised by the people of Ukara Island prove that those islanders have been at pains to spread abroad a good repute for themselves, that they are cunning, and, aware that superstition is a weakness of human nature, have sought to thrive upon it. Their power—according to the Wakerewé—over the amphibie is wonderful. One Khamis, son of Hamadi, the carpenter of Sangoro, having been a long time constructing a dhow, or sailing vessel, for his employer, shared most thoroughly in these delusions.

Khamis averred, with an oath, that there was a crocodile which lived in the house of the chief of Ukara, which fed from his hands, and was as docile and obedient to his master as a dog, and as intelligent as a man. Lukongeh had once a pretty woman in his harem, who was coveted by the Ukara chief, but the latter could devise no means to possess her for a long time until he thought of his crocodile. He instantly communicated his desire to the reptile, and bade him lie in wait in the rushes near Msossi until the woman should approach the lake to bathe, as was her custom daily, and then seize and convey her without injury across the eight-mile channel to Ukara. The next day, at noon, the woman was in the Ukara chief's house.

When I expressed a doubt about the veracity of the marvellous tale, Khamis said indignantly: "What, you doubt me? Ask Lukongeh, and he will confirm what I have told you."

He then added: "Machunda, Lukongeh's father, owned a crocodile that stole an Arab's wife, and carried her across the country to the king's house!" To Khamis, and the Wangwana who listened to him, this last was conclusive evidence that the crocodiles of Ukara were most astonishing creatures.

The Wakerewé also believe that, if a hawk seizes a fish belonging to the Wakerewé, it is sure to die in the very act!

Kaduma of Kagehyi, according to Khamis, possessed a hippopotamus which came to him each morning, for a long period, to be milked!"

We need not stay to follow Mr. Stanley's narrative in the particulars of the stern punishment which he meted out to the

'obstinate malignity' of the assassins of Bumbireh; nor to record the war in which, on his return to Uganda, he found the Emperor Mtesa engaged for the reduction of his rebellious tributaries. It is interesting to observe, however, how, amongst the distractions of warlike preparation and chequered, but finally victorious operations, Mtesa and his courtiers listened to the spiritual teaching of Mr. Stanley, and avowed their adherence to his religion, which recommended itself as being purer in doctrine and practice than the system of Mohammed.

Mr. Stanley devotes interesting and suggestive chapters to the antiquities and the more modern annals of Uganda, together with descriptions of the life and manners of its various classes, and an approximately statistical account of the various states comprising the empire.

Early in April 1876 we find the Anglo-American Expedition *en route* to Lake Tanganika; and Mr. Stanley thus summarises the results and disappointments of nearly fifteen months of laborious wandering:

'From the 17th January 1875 up to 7th April 1876 we had been engaged in tracing the extreme southern sources of the Nile, from the marshy plains and cultivated uplands where they are born, down to the mighty reservoir called the Victoria Nyanza. We had circumnavigated the entire expanse; penetrated to every bay, inlet, and creek; become acquainted with almost every variety of wild human nature—the mild and placable, the ferocious and impracticably savage, the hospitable and the inhospitable, the generous-souled as well as the ungenerous; we had viewed their methods of war, and had witnessed them imbruing their hands in each other's blood with savage triumph and glee; we had been five times sufferers by their lust for war and murder, and had lost many men through their lawlessness and ferocity; we had travelled hundreds of miles to and fro on foot along the northern coast of the Victorian Sea, and, finally, had explored with a large force the strange countries lying between the two lakes Muta Nzige and the Victoria, and had

been permitted to gaze upon the arm of the lake named by me "Beatrice Gulf," and to drink of its sweet waters. We had then returned from farther quest in that direction, unable to find a peaceful resting-place on the lake-shores, and had struck south from the Katonga lagoon down to the Alexandra Nile, the principal affluent of the Victoria Lake, which drains nearly all the waters from the west and south-west. We had made a patient survey of over one-half of its course, and then, owing to want of the means to feed the rapacity of the churlish tribes which dwell in the vicinity of the Alexandra Nyanza, and to our reluctance to force our way against the will of the natives, opposing unnecessarily our rifles to their spears and arrows, we had been compelled, on the 7th April, to bid adieu to the lands which supply the Nile, and to turn our faces towards the Tanganika.

At noon of the 27th May the bright waters of the Tanganika broke upon the view, and compelled me to linger admiringly for a while, as I did on the day I first beheld them. By 3 P.M. we were in Ujiji. Muini Kheri, Mohammed bin Gharib, Sultan bin Kassim, and Khamis the Baluch greeted me kindly. Mohammed bin Sali was dead. Nothing was changed much, except the ever-changing mud tembéas of the Arabs. The square or plaza where I met David Livingstone in November 1871 is now occupied by large tembéas. The house where he and I lived has long ago been burnt down, and in its place there remain only a few embers and a hideous void. The lake expands with the same grand beauty before the eyes as we stand in the market-place. The opposite mountains of Goma have the same blue-black colour, for they are everlasting, and the Liuché river continues its course as brown as ever just east and south of Ujiji. The surf is still as restless, and the sun as bright; the sky retains its glorious azure, and the palms all their beauty; but the grand old hero, whose presence once filled Ujiji with such absorbing interest for me, was gone!

We return for a moment to Serombo, where Mr. Stanley made the peaceful acquaintance of Mirambo, the 'Mars of Africa,' the fame of whose exploits was in all the villages from Nyangwé to Zanzibar. With this redoubtable chief Mr. Stanley sealed his friendship by going through the ceremony of 'blood-brotherhood,' which was thus performed:

'Manwa Sera [chief captain of the Anglo-American Expedition] having caused us to sit fronting each other on

a straw-carpet, he made an incision in each of our right legs, from which he extracted blood, and, interchanging it, he exclaimed aloud:

"If either of you break this brotherhood now established between you, may the lion devour him, the serpent poison him, bitterness be in his food, his friends desert him, his gun burst in his hands and wound him, and everything that is bad do wrong to him until death."

Of Mirambo Mr. Stanley writes:

"His person quite captivated me, for he was a thorough African *gentleman* in appearance, very different from my conception of the terrible bandit who had struck his telling blows at native chiefs and Arabs with all the rapidity of a Frederick the Great eviored by foes.

I entered the following notes in my journal on April 22, 1876:

"This day will be memorable to me for the visit of the famous Mirambo. He was the reverse of all my conceptions of the redoubtable chieftain, and the man I had styled the 'terrible bandit.'

He is a man about 5 feet 11 inches in height, and about thirty-five years old, with not an ounce of superfluous flesh about him. A handsome, regular-featured, mild-voiced, soft-spoken man, with what one might call a 'meek' demeanour, very generous and open-handed. The character was so different from that which I had attributed to him, that for some time a suspicion clung to my mind that I was being imposed upon, but Arabs came forward who testified that this quiet-looking man was indeed Mirambo. I had expected to see something of the Mtesa type, a man whose exterior would proclaim his life and rank; but this unpresuming mild-eyed man, of inoffensive meek exterior, whose action was so calm, without a gesture, presented to the eye nothing of the Napoleonic genius which he has for five years displayed in the heart of Unyamwezi, to the injury of Arabs and commerce, and the doubling of the price of ivory. I said there was *nothing*; but I must except the eyes, which had the steady calm gaze of a master.

During the conversation I had with him, he said he preferred boys or young men to accompany him to war; he never took middle-aged or old men, as they were sure to be troubled with wives or children, and did not fight half so well as young fellows who listened to his words. Said he, 'They have sharper eyes, and their young limbs enable them to move with the ease of serpents or the rapidity of zebras, and a few words will give them the hearts of lions. In all my wars with the Arabs, it was an army of youths that gave me victory, boys without beards. Fifteen of my young men died one day because I said I must have a certain red cloth that was thrown down as a challenge. No, no, give me youths for war in the open field, and men for the stockaded village.'

'What was the cause of your war, Mirambo, with the Arabs?' I asked.

'There was a good deal of cause. The Arabs got the big head' (proud), 'and there was no talking with them. Mkasiwa of Unyanyembé lost his head too, and thought I was his vassal, whereas I was not. My father was king of Uyo-weh, and I was his son. What right had Mkasiwa or the Arabs to say what I ought to do? But the war is now over—the Arabs know what I can do, and Mkasiwa knows it. We will not fight any more, but we will see who can do the best trade, and who is the smartest man. Any Arab or white man who would like to pass through my country is welcome. I will give him meat and drink, and a house, and no man shall hurt him.'"

On the 5th of November 1876, Mr. Stanley left Nyangwé behind him, on the eve of penetrating into the 'dark unknown,' his task being to follow to the ocean the 'superb river,' which, known in its course by many local names, and famous in all lands as the Congo, Mr. Stanley proposes for the future to call the Livingstone.

'The object of the desperate journey is to flash a torch of light across the western half of the Dark Continent. For from Nyangwé east, along the fourth parallel of south latitude, are some 830 geographical miles, discovered, explored, and surveyed, but westward to the Atlantic Ocean along the same latitude are 956 miles—over 900 geographical miles of which are absolutely unknown. Instead, however, of striking direct west, we are about to travel north on the eastern side of the river, to prevent it bending easterly to Muta Nzigé, or Nilewards, unknown to us, and to ascertain, if the river really runs westward, what affluents flow to it from the east; and to deduce from their size and volume some idea of the extent of country which they drain, and the locality of their sources.

A thousand things may transpire to prevent the accomplishment of our purpose: hunger, disease, and savage hostility may crush us; perhaps, after all, the difficulties may daunt us; but our hopes run high, and our purpose is lofty; then in the name of God let us set on, and as He pleases, so let Him rule our destinies!'

For many days and weeks the progress of the expedition was one continued series of struggles against disease, of defence against the open and the insidious attacks of jealous natives, who looked to the flesh of the expedition for





the supply of their larders, and to the skulls of its members for the mosaic ornamentation of their village-streets or market-places; of the perilous passing or the perilous avoiding of falls, rapids, and cataracts. Throughout the descent of the Livingstone, Nature, in her river systems, her geology, her fauna and her flora, offered continual objects of splendour and surprise; but, socially speaking, the land was a chaos of cruelty and iniquity. It was a country where man was emphatically 'vile,' and only began to show symptoms of a tenderer disposition when neighbourhoods were reached that had been at once softened and appetised for gain by trading intercourse with the commercial settlements of the West.

One of the adventures incidental to Mr. Stanley's descent of the Livingstone, in which the lives of some of the most spirited of his followers were at stake during a protracted crisis, is represented in the engraving which we have the privilege of incorporating with our pages. It is by itself instinct with a vividness of peril and anxiety so intense as to be almost painful; and its interest is enhanced by the singular power of Mr. Stanley's verbal description, which, although long, it would be doing him injustice to curtail. Almost every word is necessary to the picture, and carries with it its distinct significance. It is to be premised that the expedition was making its way, in the beginning of 1877, through the unfriendly region of the Bakumu; and that these people, after being utterly disheartened by the successive punishments they had received at the hands of the expedition, left them alone to try their hands at the river, which, though dangerous, promised greater pro-

gress than on land. 'The following two days' accounts of our journey,' says Mr. Stanley, 'are extracted from my journal.'

January 14.—As soon as we reached the river we began to float the canoes down a two-mile stretch of rapids to a camp opposite the south end of Ntunduru Island. Six canoes were taken safely down by the gallant boat's crew. The seventh canoe was manned by Muscati, Uledi Muscati, and Zaidi, a chief. Muscati, the steersman, lost his presence of mind, and soon upset his canoe in a piece of bad water. Muscati and his friend Uledi swam down the furious stream to Ntunduru Island, whence they were saved by the eighth canoe, manned by stout-hearted Manwa Sera and Uledi, the coxswain of the *Lady Alice*; but poor Zaidi, the chief, paralysed by the roar of the stream, unfortunately thought his safety was assured by clinging to his canoe, which was soon swept past our new camp, in full view of those who had been deputed with Frank to form it, to what seemed inevitable death. But a kindly Providence, which he has himself gratefully acknowledged, saved him even on the brink of eternity. The great fall at the north end of Ntunduru Island happens to be disparted by a single pointed rock, and on this the canoe was driven, and, borne down by the weight of the waters, was soon split in two, one side of which got jammed below, and the other was tilted upward. To this the almost drowned man clung, while perched on the rocky point, with his ankles washed by the stream. To his left, as he faced up-stream, there was a stretch of fifty yards of falling water; to his right were nearly fifty yards of leaping brown waves, while, close behind him the water fell down sheer six to eight feet, through a gap ten yards wide, between the rocky point on which he was perched and a rocky islet thirty yards long.

When called to the scene by his weeping friends, from my labours up-river, I could scarcely believe my eyes, or realise the strange chance which placed him there, and, certainly, a more critical position than the poor fellow was in cannot be imagined. The words "there is only a step between me and the grave" would have been very appropriate coming from him. But the solitary man on that narrow-pointed rock, whose knees were sometimes washed by rising waves, was apparently calmer than any of us; though we could approach him within fifty yards he could not hear a word we said; he could see us, and feel assured that we sympathised with him in his terrible position.

We then, after collecting our faculties, began to prepare means to save him. After sending men to collect rattans, we formed a cable, by which we attempted to lower a small canoe, but the instant

it seemed to reach him the force of the current hurrying to the fall was so great that the cable snapped like pack-thread, and the canoe swept by him like an arrow, and was engulfed, shattered, split, and pounded into fragments. Then we endeavoured to toss towards him poles tied to creepers, but the vagaries of the current and its convulsive heaving made it impossible to reach him with them, while the man dared not move a hand, but sat silent, watching our futile efforts, while the conviction gradually settled on our minds that his doom, though protracted, was certain.

Then, after anxious deliberation with myself, I called for another canoe, and lashed to the bow of it a cable consisting of three one-inch rattans twisted together and strengthened by all the tent-ropes. A similar cable was lashed to the side, and a third was fastened to the stern, each of these cables being ninety yards in length. A shorter cable, thirty yards long, was lashed to the stern of the canoe, which was to be guided within reach of him by a man in the canoe.

Two volunteers were called for. No one would step forward. I offered rewards. Still no one would respond. But when I began to speak to them, asking them how they would like to be in such a position without a single friend offering to assist in saving them, Uledi, the coxswain, came forward and said, "Enough, master, I will go. Mambu Kwa Mungu"—"My fate is in the hands of God"—and immediately began preparing himself, by binding his loin-cloth firmly about his waist. Then Marzouk, a boat-boy, said, "Since Uledi goes, I will go too." Other boat-boys, young Shumari and Saywa, offered their services, but I checked them, and said, "You surely are not tired of me, are you, that you all wish to die? If all my brave boat-boys are lost, what shall we do?"

Uledi and his friend Marzouk stepped into the canoe with the air of gladiators, and we applauded them heartily, but enjoined on them to be careful. Then I turned to the crowd on the shore who were manning the cables, and bade them beware of the least carelessness, as the lives of the three young men depended on their attention to the orders that would be given.

The two young volunteers were requested to paddle across river, so that the stern might be guided by those on shore. The bow and side cables were slackened until the canoe was within twenty yards of the roaring falls, and Uledi endeavoured to guide the cable to Zaidi, but the convulsive heaving of the river swept the canoe instantly to one side, where it hovered over the steep slope and brown waves of the left branch, from the swirl of which we were compelled to draw it. Five times the attempt was made, but at last, the sixth time, encouraged by the safety of the cables, we lowered the canoe until it was within ten yards of

Zaidi, and Uledi lifted the short cable and threw it over to him and struck his arm. He had just time to grasp it before he was carried over into the chasm below. For thirty seconds we saw nothing of him, and thought him lost, when his head rose above the edge of the falling waters. Instantly the word was given to "haul away," but at the first pull the bow and side cables parted, and the canoe began to glide down the left branch with my two boat-boys on board! The stern cable next parted, and, horrified at the result, we stood muttering "La il Allah, il Allah!" watching the canoe severed from us drifting to certain destruction, when we suddenly observed it halted. Zaidi in the chasm clinging to his cable was acting as a kedge-anchor, which swept the canoe against the rocky islet. Uledi and Marzouk sprang out of the canoe, and leaning over assisted Zaidi out of the falls, and the three, working with desperate energy, succeeded in securing the canoe on the islet.

But though we hurried and were exceedingly rejoiced, their position was still but a short reprieve from death. There were fifty yards of wild waves, and a resistless rush of water, between them and safety, and to the right of them was a fall 800 yards in width, and below was a mile of falls and rapids, and great whirlpools, and waves rising like little hills in the middle of the terrible stream, and below these were the fell cannibals of Wane-Mukwa and Asama.

How to reach the islet was a question which now perplexed me. We tied a stone to about a hundred yards of whipcord, and after the twentieth attempt they managed to catch it. To the end of the whipcord they tied the tent-rope which had parted before, and drawing it to our side we tied the stout rattan creeper, which they drew across taut, and fastened to a rock, by which we thought we had begun to bridge the stream. But night drawing nigh, we said to them that we would defer further experiment until morning.

Meantime the ninth canoe, whose steersman was a supernumerary of the boat, had likewise got upset, and he out of six men was drowned, to our great regret, but the canoe was saved. All other vessels were brought down safely, but so long as my poor faithful Uledi and his friends are on the islet, and still in the arms of death, the night finds us gloomy, sorrowing, and anxious.

January 15.—My first duty this morning was to send greetings to the three brave lads on the islet, and to assure them that they should be saved before they were many hours older. Thirty men with guns were sent to protect thirty other men searching for rattans in the forest, and by nine o'clock we possessed over sixty strong canes, besides other long climbers, and as fast as we were able to twist them together they were drawn

across by Uledi and his friends. Besides, we sent light cables to be lashed round the waist of each man, after which we felt trebly assured that all accidents were guarded against. Then hailing them I motioned to Uledi to begin, while ten men seized the cable, one end of which he had fastened round his waist. Uledi was seen to lift his hands up to heaven, and waving his hand to us he leaped into the wild flood, seizing the bridge cable as he fell into the depths. Soon he rose, hauling himself hand over hand, the waves brushing his face, and sometimes rising over his head, until it seemed as if he scarcely would be able to breathe; but by jerking his body occasionally upward with a desperate effort, he so managed to survive the waves and to approach us, where a dozen willing hands were stretched out to snatch the half-smothered man. Zaidi next followed, but after the tremendous proofs he had given of his courage and tenacious hold we did not much fear for his safety, and he also landed, to be warmly congratulated for his double escape from death. Marzouk, the youngest, was the last, and we held our breaths while the gallant boy was struggling out of the fierce grasp of death. While yet midway the pressure of water was so great that he lost his hold of two cables, at which the men screamed in terror lest he should relax his hold altogether from despair, but I shouted harshly to him, "Pull away, you fool! Be a man!" at which with three hauls he approached within reach of our willing hands, to be embraced and applauded by all. The cheers we gave were so loud and hearty that the cannibal Wane-Mukwa must have known, despite the roar of the waters, that we had passed through a great and thrilling scene.

The people of Mowa, about two hundred miles from the coast, amongst whom Mr. Stanley found himself in parts of May and June 1877, were of a very friendly temper, and 'appeared in camp by the hundred, to ponder and barter, and be amused.' But their superstition nearly provoked them to actual hostilities. Five or six hundred of these people, on the third day after the arrival of the expedition, approached the camp, shouting their war-cries, and armed with muskets. Mr. Stanley graphically relates the difficulty, and the pleasant and clever *ruse* by which it was overcome.

'When they had assembled at about a hundred yards in front of our camp,

Safeni and I walked up towards them, and sat down midway. Some half-dozen of the Mowa people came near, and the shauri began.

"What is the matter, my friends?" I asked. "Why do you come with guns in your hands in such numbers, as though you were coming to fight? Fight! Fight us, your friends! Tut! this is some great mistake, surely."

"Mundelé," replied one of them, a tall fellow with a mop-head which reminded me of Mwana Saramba, who had accompanied me round Lake Victoria—"our people saw you yesterday make marks on some tara-tara" (paper). "This is very bad. Our country will waste, our goats will die, our bananas will rot, and our women will dry up. What have we done to you, that you should wish to kill us? We have sold you food and we have brought you wine each day. Your people are allowed to wander where they please without trouble. Why is the Mundelé so wicked? We have gathered together to fight you if you do not burn that tara-tara now before our eyes. If you burn it we go away, and shall be friends as heretofore."

I told them to rest there, and left Safeni in their hands as a pledge that I should return. My tent was not fifty yards from the spot, but while going towards it my brain was busy in devising some plan to foil this superstitious madness. My note-book contained a vast number of valuable notes; plans of falls, creeks, villages, sketches of localities, ethnological and philological details, sufficient to fill two octavo volumes—everything was of general interest to the public. I could not sacrifice it to the childish caprice of savages. As I was rummaging my book box, I came across a volume of Shakespeare (Chandos edition), much worn and well thumbed, and which was of the same size as my field-book; its cover was similar also, and it might be passed for the note-book provided that no one remembered its appearance too well. I took it to them.

"Is this the tara-tara, friends, that you wish burnt?"

"Yes, yes; that is it!"

"Well, take it, and burn it or keep it."

"M—m. No, no, no. We will not touch it. It is fetish. You must burn it."

"I? Well, let it be so. I will do anything to please my good friends of Mowa."

We walked to the nearest fire. I breathed a regretful farewell to my genial companion, which during many weary hours of night had assisted to relieve my mind when oppressed by almost intolerable woes, and then gravely consigned the innocent Shakespeare to the flames, heaping the brush-fuel over it with ceremonious care.

"Ah-h-h!" breathed the poor deluded natives, sighing their relief. "The Mundelé is good—is very good. He loves his Mowa friends. There is no trouble now,

Mundelé. The Mowa people are not bad." And something approaching to a cheer was shouted among them, which terminated the episode of the burning of Shakespeare.'

On the 3d of June, Frank Pocock, the 'little master' of the expedition, and for a long time the only European companion of Mr. Stanley, fell a victim to his 'too brave' attempt to navigate the Massassa Falls.

'As I looked at the empty tent and the dejected woe-stricken servants, a choking sensation of unutterable grief filled me. The sorrow-laden mind fondly recalled the lost man's inestimable qualities, his extraordinary gentleness, his patient temper, his industry, cheerfulness, and his tender friendship; it dwelt upon the pleasure of his society, his general usefulness, his piety, and cheerful trust in our success with which he had renewed our hope and courage; and each new virtue that it remembered only served to intensify my sorrow for his loss, and to suffuse my heart with pity and regret that, after the exhibition of so many admirable qualities and such long faithful service, he should depart this life so abruptly, and without reward.

When curtained about by anxieties, and the gloom created by the almost insurmountable obstacles we encountered, his voice had ever made music in my soul. When grieving for the hapless lives that were lost, he consoled me. But now my friendly comforter and true-hearted friend was gone! Ah, had some one then but relieved me from my cares, and satisfied me that my dark followers would see their Zanzibar homes again, I would that day have gladly ended the struggle, and, crying out, "Who dies earliest dies best," have embarked in my boat and dropped calmly over the cataracts into eternity.

The moon rose high above the southern wall of the chasm. Its white funereal light revealed in ghostly motion the scene of death to which I owed the sundering of a long fellowship and a firm-knit unity. Over the great Zinga Fall I sat for hours upon a warm boulder, looking up river towards the hateful Massassa, deluding myself with the vain hope that by some chance he might have escaped out of the dreadful whirlpool, picturing the horrible scene which an intense and morbid imagination called up with such reality that I half fancied that the scene was being enacted, while I was helpless to relieve.

How awful sounded the thunders of the many falls in the silent and calm night! Between distant Mowa's torrent-rush, down to Ingulu below, the Massessé, Massassa, and Zinga filled the wall-ed channel with their fury, while the latter, only thirty yards from me, hissed

and tore along with restless plunge and gurgle, and roaring plunged, glistening white, into a sea of billows.

Alas, alas! we never saw Frank more. Vain was the hope that by some miracle he might have escaped, for eight days afterwards a native arrived at Zinga from Kilanga, with the statement that a fisherman, while skimming Kilanga basin for whitebait, had been attracted by something gleaming on the water, and, paddling his canoe towards it, had been horrified to find it to be the upturned face of a white man.'

Early in August, Mr. Stanley's expedition, although only three days' journey from Boma, or Embomma, was in peril of starvation, owing partly to the sterility of the country, but more to the selfish *insouciance* of the people, who would not anticipate the fixed date of their next market. Sending forward messengers to Embomma, he presently found his wants bountifully ministered to by the European residents, a deputation of whom came out to meet him as far as N'safu, and thence to conduct him to Embomma.

'On the 9th August 1877, the 999th day from the date of our departure from Zanzibar, we prepared to greet the van of civilisation.

From the bare rocky ridges of N'safu, there is a perceptible decline to the Congo valley, and the country becomes in appearance more sterile—a sparse population dwelling in a mere skeleton village in the centre of bleakness. Shingly rocks strewed the path and the waste, and thin sere grass waved mournfully on level and spine, on slope of ridge and crest of hill; in the hollows it was somewhat thicker: in the bottoms it had a slight tinge of green.

We had gradually descended some five hundred feet along declining spurs, when we saw a scattered string of hammocks appearing, and gleams of startling whiteness, such as were given by flue linen and twills.

A buzz of wonder ran along our column. Proceeding a little farther, we stopped, and in a short time I was face to face with four white—ay, truly white men!

As I looked into their faces, I blushed to find that I was wondering at their paleness. Poor pagan Africans—Rwoma of Uzinja, and man-eating tribes of the Livingstone! The whole secret of their wonder and curiosity flashed upon me at once. What arrested the twanging bow and the deadly trigger of the cannibals? What but the weird pallor of myself and

Frank? In the same manner the sight of the pale faces of the Embomma merchants gave me the slightest suspicion of an involuntary shiver. The pale colour, after so long gazing on rich black and richer bronze, had something of an unaccountable ghastliness. I could not divest myself of the feeling that they must be sick; yet, as I compare their complexions to what I now view, I should say they were olive, sunburnt, dark.

Yet there was something very self-possessed about the carriage of these white men. It was grand; a little self-pride mixed with cordiality. I could not remember just then that I had witnessed such bearing among any tribe throughout Africa. They spoke well also; the words they uttered hit the sense pat; without gesture, they were perfectly intelligible. How strange! It was quite delightful to observe the slight nods of the head; the intelligent facial movements were admirably expressive. They were completely clothed, and neat also; I ought to say immaculately clean. Jaunty straw hats, coloured neckties, patent-leather boots, well-cut white clothes, virtuously clean. I looked from them to my people, and then I fear I felt almost like being grateful to the Creator that I was not as black as they, and that these finely-dressed, well-spoken whites claimed me as friend and kin. Yet I did not dare to place myself upon an equality with them as yet; the calm blue and gray eyes rather awed me, and the immaculate purity of their clothes dazzled me. I was content to suppose myself a kind of connecting link between the white and the African for the time being. Possibly familiarity would beget greater confidence.

The delight of the people on whom deliverance had dawned from the darkness of despondency was indescribable; and their enthusiasm was scarcely surpassed in its joy and delight, when a few weeks after the survivors of the expedition saluted once more their friends and relatives at Zanzibar, whither Mr. Stanley's

paternal solicitude determined him to convey them. The bare statement of such a determination must invest Mr. Stanley's name with a halo of glory beyond the conventional honours which he now began, in a brilliant series, to receive from civilised nations. If he found devotion amongst his followers, we recognise that it was because he inspired and deserved it. Further praise would be impertinence.

The romance of Mr. Stanley's travel ends with his 'gliding through the broad portal into the Atlantic Ocean,' after which he became so far an ordinary traveller that his progress was along frequented and protected routes. It is, therefore, just as he emerges from the Livingstone that we most fittingly take leave of him—which we do in the words in which he took leave of the wonderful stream hereafter to be so closely identified with his reputation, and to be known, so far as his will and purpose have weight, no longer as the Congo, but the Livingstone:

'Turning to take a farewell glance at the mighty river on whose brown bosom we had endured so greatly, I saw it approach, awed and humbled, the threshold of the watery immensity, to whose immeasurable volume and illimitable expanse, awful as had been its power, and terrible as had been its fury, its flood was but a drop. And I felt my heart suffused with purest gratitude to Him whose hand had protected us, and who had enabled us to pierce the Dark Continent from east to west, and to trace its mightiest river to its ocean bourn.

BLUE EYES AND GOLDEN HAIR.

IN SIX CHAPTERS.

BY ANNIE THOMAS (MRS. PENDER CUDLIP).

CHAPTER VI.

'I DON'T think we'll talk about it any more to-night, aunt Bertram.'

'My dear child, not for the world will I say a word, if you're tired; but we haven't talked about it at all yet. I only want to tell you how rejoiced I am, and how *satisfied* I am, Daisy.'

'Well, I am neither rejoiced nor satisfied,' Daisy says, turning away impatiently from her aunt's caresses. They have come back from Lady Beauton's ball, and Miss Bertram has just heard the great news: her niece, the 'lovely Daisy Eldon,' is engaged to the catch of the season. Miss Bertram is so supremely delighted with herself for the family feeling she has displayed in having Daisy up to stay with her, that she resolves to bear and forbear unto the end, though Daisy's lukewarmness on the subject of her own success is 'very trying to her aunt.'

'I felt sure that it was settled the other day, Daisy; but you were in a teasing mood, and you wouldn't confide in me.'

'No,' Daisy says, flaming out in the distress which she herself can only partially understand. 'I was in a mean mood, aunt Bertram, and I dared not tell you how I had disappointed you; I refused Sir Bolingbroke that day because I didn't know what it was to care for any one; that's two days ago, and to-night I've accept-

ed Sir Bolingbroke (what a mouthful!) because I *do* know what it is to care for some one.'

'You have learnt to appreciate Sir Bolingbroke?' her aunt says, disregarding Daisy's remark about 'the mouthful.'

'I've done nothing of the kind. I've only learnt to appreciate myself too highly to cry for a moon that will not shine for me alone,' Daisy says, striving to speak cheerfully, and failing signally in her attempt; and Miss Bertram, with a timely remembrance of that 'singularly handsome young man' who hails from Burnsleigh, decides upon not pursuing the subject of Daisy's delusions any further this night.

The following day the report of Sir Bolingbroke Bray's approaching marriage with lovely Daisy Eldon is bruited about at all the clubs, and while it is remarked that 'it's a jolly good thing for the girl,' people still hope that he 'won't be such a brute to her' as he was to his first wife.

Simultaneously with this another marriage engagement is promulgated. The *Morning Post* and the *Court Circular* announce in their respective columns that Lord St. Briac, the eldest son of the Marquis of Beauton, will shortly lead to the hymeneal altar the beautiful and accomplished daughter and sole heiress of Robert Millard, Esq.

Daisy reads this announcement on the evening of the day after

Lady Beuton's ball—reads it hopelessly, helplessly, feeling as if all her life were going to be laid waste by a misunderstanding. She has been tricked, deceived, inveigled into promising herself to Sir Bolingbroke Bray; and now that her promise has been made public, and there is no going back for her, she finds that the heiress is to be Lady St. Briac, and that Harry Poynter is still free. Fettered, furious with the man who has misled her and whom she is going to marry, the poor child feels more miserable and desolate in these first hours of what the world regards as her triumph than she has ever felt before in her life. There can be no doubt about Miss Millard's engagement to St. Briac, for they meet Lady Beuton at an at home in the afternoon, and she verbally indorses the statement of the *Morning Post*. Still those words of the heiress's that had sealed Daisy's doomring in Daisy's ears, puzzling and perplexing her cruelly. To what, to whom, could they have borne reference?—

'You must come to-morrow morning. I will prepare mamma for the news, and she will plead the cause we have at heart with my father; he cannot stand out against us three.'

By all the laws of common sense and reason Daisy has been justified in supposing that these words spoken, by Julia Millard to Harry Poynter, were the words of a girl discussing their love affairs with her lover. 'What other cause could her mother plead with her father that could possibly concern Harry? I must find out, though knowing the truth won't help me now; still I must find out,' she says to herself. 'The first time I see him I'll tell him what I overheard; and if he suspects the truth about me, I can't

help it. I must solve the mystery.'

She shuts her eyes to the fact that there will be danger in the course she is bent upon pursuing. She, engaged as she is to Sir Bolingbroke, will put herself very much at the mercy of this other man by betraying to him the deep desperate interest she has in any tender possibility concerning him. 'I must find out; it's too dreadful not to know something about the hidden rock on which I've been wrecked. I'll ask him right out what that girl meant, and tell him what I thought she meant; and if he puts two and two together, and guesses that what I thought drove me nearly mad, I can't help it.'

'I can't help it.' This is the phrase which is constantly on her lips now during these desperate exciting first days of her engagement. She cannot help herself, and she cannot help thinking more and more wildly and warmly of Harry, whom she has lost, she feels sure, merely through a misconception. The restless craving for fuller information on the subject nearly wears her out, and to the distress of her aunt and her future husband she flags visibly, and shows but a weary face to the world which is expecting to see her elated at her good fortune. She fancies that if she could only see Harry and 'set herself right in his eyes,' that she would grow calmer and more at peace with the prospect that is before her. Her eyes strain themselves to see him in the Row, at the Opera, and in every other place in which there is a possibility of his presence. 'If I could only see him, if I could only tell him!' This is the burden of her cry; and it galls Sir Bolingbroke to the quick to perceive that the *fiancée* he has raised, as he considers, from the

ranks, is oblivious of him before his own set. He longs to ask sometimes, when he sees her eyes roving anxiously round a room in search of some one who is not there, 'What the devil are you mooning about?' but he restrains himself; he will wait till the nuptial knot is tied; for Sir Bolingbroke Bray is far too gentlemanly a man even to swear at a lady who is not his wife. But he makes up his mind that by and by he will twist the truth out of Daisy, and if it is not altogether flattering to himself he will then punish her for having told it.

Unquestionably Daisy's manner is not flattering to the man to whom she has surrendered herself. If he cared one jot about her heart it would be more than unflattering; it would, indeed, be exquisitely painful to him. As it is, he only cares about her beauty, and that intensifies itself under the influence of the numerous conflicting emotions which paint themselves in never-ending variety of expression on her face.

'She may hark back to some old feeling, and pine in silence for some village bumpkin of a lover as much as she pleases while she continues to look as she does now—the loveliest creature into whom the breath of life has ever been breathed,' he tells himself complacently enough as he watches her attracting universal attention and admiration, and 'keeping her head' the while in a way that does credit to her breeding, as she has had no training to prepare her for it.

At length, after a few days, the tension relaxes, and that air of being perpetually on the 'look out' departs from Daisy's manner. She has had a letter from her sister Ethel, and this passage occurs in it:

'Mr. Poynter has come home at last. Both Mr. Lincoln and papa are very much vexed with him because he has insisted on inaugurating himself so quietly. How magnificent he is! I wonder you didn't lose your heart to him, for he tells us he met you accidentally in town; but, I suppose, Sir Bolingbroke is much more magnificent, and you'll be a "lady" into the bargain. What a darling aunt Bertram is! Thanks to her, we shall turn out in a most wonderful way at your wedding. Papa is saying that he wishes aunt Bertram would pay Mr. Poynter—such an old friend as he is—the compliment of asking him to the marriage-feast. He would like the attention, and it might make it pleasanter for the lot of us whose lines are cast down here.'

'Is your letter from home? Miss Bertram asks suavely.

She has been watching her niece's changing face while the latter has been taking in the full meaning of the matter about which her young sister has gossipped. 'He' has gone home, without seeing her, without wishing her 'good-bye' or 'happiness,' and he has gone home in a state of dejection. There is balm in Gilead still.

'Yes; from Ethel,' Daisy says in answer to her aunt's question. 'Dear Ethel! I feel as if I had never made half enough of her before, and now I'm going to leave her.'

'My dear, you can do a great deal more good for her by "leaving" her, as you call it, than by staying with her,' Miss Bertram says prosaically and sensibly. 'When you're married, you can introduce your young sisters well; and if they have half your beauty, they'll succeed under such auspices as yours.'

And then Miss Bertram goes on to speak of the joy it will be to her to receive her dear sister and her dear sister's family on such a glorious occasion as this of Daisy's marriage.

'You'll think me very ungrateful,' Daisy says humbly; 'but, after all, I've been thinking I should like to go to be married at Burnsleigh.'

'Impossible!' Miss Bertram says decisively. 'You may have Ethel up here at once, if you like; but the idea of your being married at Burnsleigh is simply preposterous. Sir Bolingbroke must not see the barrenness of the land before it his interest to cultivate it a little.'

'Then, at any rate, let me go down for a week before,' Daisy pleads. 'I must see them all again while I'm their own Daisy—all their own Daisy—still. Just think, aunt Bertram, how mamma must long to have me "tell her all about it" now that I can tell it; after I'm married I shall be different, and not able to speak as I should now.'

Her heart is so set upon her scheme that her aunt is compelled to entertain it. Daisy reverts again and again to the topic.

'Let me go to them for a few days while I am all their own. When they come up to the wedding Sir Bolingbroke's claims will interfere with theirs, and they may fancy that I am estranged from them by my good fortune. Dear aunt Bertram, let me go! I have been so much to my mother, let me go and assure her that I want to be more than ever to her; let me go and make her heart glad, poor patient darling, by telling her of what I will be able to do for Ethel and the others.'

She pleads, she persists, she carries the day eventually, so far as this, that Miss Bertram accords

her permission for the brief visit to Burnsleigh to be made, provided 'Sir Bolingbroke assents.'

'I shall not care for his assent or dissent,' Daisy says. 'Till I'm his wife he has no power, and I shouldn't think he is mean enough to have the inclination to control me; and after I am his wife, even he will hardly use his authority over me to divide me from my own father and mother. It will do me good to go home for a few days, aunt Bertram. I shall get quieter; I shall realise better what I am going to do; I shall set my soul at rest, in fact.'

So it is settled, without Sir Bolingbroke's knowledge, that Daisy is to go back to the family nest for a few days, and none suspects the poor little strategist of being actuated by other than the sweetest and purest family feeling in making this move.

On the whole, Sir Bolingbroke is not altogether ill-pleased at the plan. In three weeks Daisy will be his wife, and he will be in a position to control, direct, and mould her precisely as he pleases. But just now, in the mean time, before this absolute authority is vested in his hands, Daisy is rather difficult to deal with. He does not object to her being *distracted* when he is with her alone; but it annoys him to see her so in society, when other people are keenly observant of her. He knows that it is more than hinted that the cause of her acceptance of himself was distress at the defection of another; and as he does not know who that other is, he has the feeling that he may be taken unawares at any moment should his rival reappear on the scene. For a brief time he entertains the fallacious notion of its being Lord St. Briac who has preceded him in Daisy's affections. But he is cast adrift on a

sea of doubt again by Daisy's manner of mentioning St. Briac and Miss Millard.

'That ought to be a happy marriage,' the girl says sagely; 'for she's very sensible, and he is a dear good fellow, generous and gentle, and beautifully fond of his mother.'

'Yes; St. Briac's all right enough,' Sir Bolingbroke admits. 'He was rather hard hit by you, wasn't he? And you were more than rather hard hit by him, they said.'

"They" said right for once,' Daisy replies calmly. 'I liked him so much that I wonder I didn't like him more, only—'

"Only" what, Daisy? Will you tell me that you would have liked him better if you hadn't known me? Sir Bolingbroke whispers, making an indifferent effort to play the *exigeant* lover's part.

'No, I won't tell you anything of the sort,' Daisy says sturdily, impelled by she hardly knows what motive to risk the position she has gained. Sir Bolingbroke's vanity is, she has discovered, a great and greedy beast, which she has firmly resolved never to feed. Nevertheless she has pledged herself to live the remainder of her life with it. It seems to her, therefore, that the better policy for her to pursue is one that will make this same greedy beast understand from the first that it must not look for food and sustenance from her. 'I won't tell you that, for it wouldn't be true,' she says so softly that he cannot be annoyed with her.

'It would be pleasing and polite, and one wants pleasantness and politeness in society rather than truth, Daisy,' he laughs.

'Truth is the best offering I can make you; don't try to teach me to deceive you,' she says

frankly; and then she remembers what motive it is that is impelling her principally to pay this visit to Burnsleigh, and her face burns with a painful blush.

'It would take a cleverer woman than you to deceive me,' he answers carelessly. 'I'd advise you never to try to throw dust in my eyes, Daisy; because you wouldn't succeed, and I should despise you for the failure more than I should for the attempt. What has made you take this freak into your head about going down to Burnsleigh?'

He asks the question with such abrupt suddenness that she feels as if she stands convicted and condemned before him directly. For the first time she fully recognises the fact that, whatever he is or whatever he may have been, her allegiance is entirely due to him, for she has pledged her faith to him, and there has been no undue influence brought to bear upon her in order to induce her to do so. To her, at least, he has behaved straightforwardly, honourably, and well; and the fact of her not loving him does in no wise exonerate her from the onus that is on her of behaving straightforwardly, honourably, and well to him in return. The bondage is hateful to her; but she has gone into it of her own free will, and it behoves her to bear the burden her own rash haste has laid upon her as bravely and honourably as she can.

'I thought I would like to see them all once more before I married, while they could feel that I was quite their own still,' she replies, in a choking voice.

'Well, I have nothing to say against it,' he says coolly; 'only don't invite the whole parish up to stay with you next season. The friends of your youth are all very well in their proper places, but I

have no appreciation for bucolic *badinage* and *bonhomie*; therefore, if I were you, I should advise the friends of my youth to keep clear of me when they come up to the Cattle Show next year.'

She blushes now with indignation.

'You're surely not speaking of my family in that way, Sir Bolingbroke? If you are, I think I'll give myself the advice you suggest I should give them, and "keep clear of you," not only next season, but altogether.'

'Don't be huffy, dear little girl,' he laughs. 'My remarks didn't apply to your family at all. I was thinking of that untutored young savage who found himself in civilised society at Lady Beanton's, I believe, for the first time in his life, and who there distinguished himself by trying to compromise Miss Millard by his ferocious attentions.'

'O, you *are* unjust, Bolingbroke! Daisy cries indignantly. 'Harry Poynter is as true and courteous a gentleman as any one of you; and as for having striven to "compromise" Miss Millard by his attentions, I can answer for it that she received them as if she liked them very much indeed.'

'He either did know, or he ought to have known, that Miss Millard was just engaged to St. Briac, and that therefore it was not a happy moment for him to select to lay his scalp at her feet,' Sir Bolingbroke laughs.

It is on the tip of Daisy's tongue to say that St. Briac forgot it too, as a matter of fact. But even for the sake of palliating Harry's conduct, she will not be untrue to her instincts and to the loyal silence she has resolved to observe about St. Briac. So she checks this observation, and says instead,

'He shall not be brought in

contact with you by means of me any more, I promise you that; and you, in return, promise that you won't hurt my feelings by speaking disparagingly of him to me: he's an old friend and a dear friend of mine, Bolingbroke, and—he—gave—me—my Tartar.'

Poor Daisy is so affected by the thoughts of the renunciation she has volunteered to make, that a ball rises in her throat, and her utterance is choked by sobs. She is glad that Tartar is the "motive" of the concluding sentence.

'Has anything happened to the dog?' Sir Bolingbroke asks.

He is not altogether unkind; he is only careless and worldly, and a little too much absorbed in himself to have an eye for the effect the lights and shades of his conduct may have on any one else. But he is a true Englishman and sportsman; and though he can crush all the joy of life out of a woman's heart by his cruelty, he will not be callous to her suffering about a dog.

'No; Tartar is alive and well, and just the same as ever, which is more than can be said of Tartar's mistress. I have changed my mind about going to Burnleigh. After all I shouldn't be all their own Daisy; my head is too full of other things; and it would be harder for them to see me there as I am now than not to see me at all until there *ought* to be a change in me. They'll be up in a week or two; I'll not go down.'

She speaks very decidedly and looks at him inquiringly, expecting him to express pleasure at her change of intention. He has none to express; for Sir Bolingbroke Bray finds the part of lover a heavy one to play with the woman whom he means to make his wife. Moreover, he has a matter of business to adjust, which began

in romance and has ended in rather an unpleasantly realistic way, which demands a great deal of the time and attention which of right belongs to Daisy now. It seems to him, therefore, that Fortune is playing his cards very complacently for him when Daisy projects this visit to Burnsleigh. Accordingly, he magnanimously holds her to the fulfilment of her scheme when she, in an access of good faithful feeling towards him, proposes to back out of it. So finally it is settled that Daisy goes down to Burnsleigh, to say farewell to all her old friends, by the express desire of Sir Bolingbroke Bray. Just for one week she is to be—or to play at being—the free and happy Daisy Eldon of old times. At the expiration of that week she is to come back to the custody of her aunt, who will in turn, when a few busy days full of buying are over, deliver her up to the charge of the man who has notoriously so signally failed to take proper care of the woman who has preceded her.

Once more behold Daisy down at Burnsleigh.

'Things have come round in such a wonderful way,' Mrs. Granville observes, 'that Daisy's old friends ought to do all they can to make the last days of her residence among their happy ones.'

It is hot August weather now; but disregarding the blazing sun, Mrs. Granville broils over to the rectory and asks all the grown-up members of the Eldon family to a banquet in honour of themselves, to grace which all the brightest social lights whom she numbers among her acquaintances shall be gathered together.

'Mr. Poynter, young Harry Poynter—I daresay you have forgotten him, Daisy; but I assure you he is worth recalling to your

memory now—he has come home since you left us, and he seems to take quite a pleasure in coming to the Court and making himself one of us.'

Mrs. Granville delivers this shot well into that poor target, Daisy; for the astute lady has heard rumours of Harry's *rencontre* with Daisy in London, and she wishes to let Daisy see that, high as she may soar socially, Mr. Poynter is of account in his own country-side, and may fall to the lot of one of Mrs. Granville's own uncomely daughters.

'Do you see much of Harry?' Daisy asks unwarily.

'Much of him! My dear child, consider for one moment: where could he go if he didn't come to us for social intercourse? Mary and Alice are such dear good girls that they don't care what trouble they take to give pleasure to a fellow-creature; they won't let him be dull and lonely—'

Pretty Ethel Eldon, Daisy's sister, interrupts the great lady of the parish here with a laugh.

'No; I see that they won't let him be lonely, Mrs. Granville: I've seen them on the Glenholme road every day for the last week. But Mr. Poynter seems ungratefully to prefer the society of a dog to that of young ladies; he comes here every morning for Tartar to go for a run with him.'

'Well, you'll meet him at my house on the 8th,' Mrs. Granville says, trying to smile unconditional approval of Harry's line of conduct and Ethel's mention of it. 'I am sorry, my dear,' she continues to Daisy, 'that Sir Bolingbroke is not down with you; we should *much* like to have shown him that, though he *is* going to carry off the flower of Burnsleigh, we quite forgive him, and hope to become *very* much better acquainted with him

next year. Mary and Alice were saying how delightful it will be to be chaperoned by you, their old friend.'

Daisy's eyes distend as Mrs. Granville says this. Is she mad or dreaming when she fancies that the ill-bred and autocratic squires of Burnside is meanly endeavouring to propitiate her—Daisy Eldon? 'And it's so foolish of her, as well as mean,' Daisy tells herself, 'to think that her civility of ten minutes is to blot out all recollection of her incivility of twenty years!'

But in spite of her vivid recollection of this incivility Daisy gives in her cordial adhesion to the plan of going to the Granville gathering. If, by any other means, she could secure a brief interview with Harry Poynter, and show him that she is his old friend, and that she does take a warm interest in him still, she would shrink from shining forth at Mrs. Granville's bidding. But there is no prospect of her doing this. Since her return to the rectory Harry Poynter has neglected Tartar, and refrained from the slightest neighbourly attention to the Eldons. Therefore, though it galls her to go to Mrs. Granville, she presses the claims of that lady's hospitality well home to her family; and as she is and always has been paramount with them, they proceed there on the day, and are received by the squires of Burnside in an impressive way that is designed to touch Daisy into extending boundless advantages to the two uncomely daughters next year in town. But Daisy is oblivious both of the attention and the intention. Her eyes are wandering over the various groups that are dotted about on the lawn, and at last she sees him, and is innocently aided in seeking him by her sister Ethel.

'Look, Daisy; there's Mr. Poynter! I am going to bring him to you and make him promise to give us an otter-hunt at the Glenholme pool to-morrow or the next day—at any rate while you're here;' and before Daisy can arrest Ethel's progress the latter is walking across the lawn in the direction of Mr. Poynter, utterly regardless of the amiable and intelligent observation that is brought to bear upon her action.

Daisy stands outside the drawing-room window, on the terrace, surrounded by a cluster of people, who try to treat the once over-looked and kept-in-the-background 'parson's daughter' as if she were a portion of their private property, of which they were remarkably proud. They coo at her, and gush congratulations at her mother, and quite forget that Daisy has a memory.

Meanwhile Ethel walks, with the free and happy boldness of a kitten, right up to the spot where Harry Poynter is; and Daisy, watching them, thinks what a handsome pair they make, and tries to feel gratified at the sight. 'Little reck's she' of the emotions that flood his soul as 'Daisy's sister' addresses him.

'Mr. Poynter, why have you neglected Tartar for the last three days? Even the presence of his mistress hasn't consoled him for your defection. Did you know that my sister Daisy had come home?'

The girl asks the question in such perfectly unsuspecting good faith that he cannot diplomatise about the subject with her.

'Yes; I knew it, and that is the reason I did not come for Tartar as usual,' he says, in a low voice, turning aside with Ethel from the group as he speaks. And Daisy sees the movement, and feels that

the tone and—misunderstands the position!

'It will be Ethel, and she will be so happy, and I shall be so glad!' poor Daisy says, forcing the tears, that are so foolishly ready to fall, back from her sorrowful-looking eyes. And just then she is called upon to play lawn-tennis with some of the county potentates, for Mrs. Granville cannot glorify Daisy too much on this occasion; and so she loses sight of Harry Poynter and Ethel while she goes through the graceful gymnastics that the exigencies of the game compel her to perform.

'After all I am glad things are as they are,' tired Daisy tells herself later in the evening. 'Papa and mamma are receiving the recognition and attention they ought to have had all along, because people know now that they will never feel the grip of poverty again; and Ethel will be happy down here close to them, and I— But it doesn't matter for me.'

The heartsick words are barely said before she forgets that she ever had occasion to say them, for a voice close to her side whispers,

'Daisy, your sister tells me she knows you would like to speak to me. Can she be right?'

For answer Daisy gives him her hand, and then (blessings on the liberty of lawn-parties!) the two stroll away together.

They reach the verge of the lawn, and opposite to them, only divided from them by a narrow gravel path, there is a prettily planted little wood which has been carefully trained into the semblance of a wilderness. They both look at it fondly, but neither likes to suggest to the other the delicious impropriety of crossing over to its leafy depths. Pre-

sently a guardian angel whispers to her that it is her last chance, and that she had better take it.

'I wish we could bring one of those nice seats over here,' she says, breaking silence for the first time.

'As we can't do that, let us cross over to one of the nice seats,' he replies; and Daisy acquiesces. His next remark may appear rather unintelligible and wide of any ascertained purpose, but to Daisy it is perfectly comprehensible.

'It was an awful blow to me,' he says gently, as they sit down, 'an awful blow at first; but I feel now that it was my ignorance that led me on. Do you forgive me for not having gone with the rest of the world to wish you happiness?'

No answer comes in words from Daisy; but he sees her tremble and he hears her sigh.

'I have no right to tell you this now, any more than I had reason to hope that you were listening to me with tenderness when it was only tolerance you extended; but, Daisy, it will never do you any harm to hear now how I've loved you ever since I was a boy; how I've associated you with every hope I've ever had about Glenholme; how I've hated the hardness of the lines that kept me away from telling you this till the law granted that I had come to years of discretion; and now it's too late!'

'Is it?'

'Is it not, my sweet? Can you give up the place you'll have as Lady Bray? Dare I ask you to give it up? What turned you from me, Daisy, in that short time? What made the sweetest eyes that were ever seen lie either to Sir Bolingbroke or me that night?'

Then—led on by she knows not what impulse—she reminds

him of the words she heard Miss Millard speak to him that night; and she nearly dies with dismay at the thought of her own rashness when she learns that it was of a cast-off brother of her own, whom Harry had met and befriended in Australia, that the heiress spoke that night.

Sir Bolingbroke Bray bears the news of the breaking-off of the marriage between himself and Daisy like the lenient and charitable profligate he is.

'Poor little Daisy!' he says; 'it would have been a cruelty to take her against her will; for she would never have made a bolt from me when I became intolerable to her: she would have been too good for that; and so she would have stayed and been wretched; and the sight of a wretched woman is maddening when you've no cause to kick her out.'

He is not in the least vindictive or even seriously vexed about Daisy; and he shows that he is not either by inviting Mr. and Mrs. Harry Poynter to his wedding when he marries Miss Millard; the Beauton family having found the heiress wanting as

soon as it becomes a publicly avowed fact that she has made peace between her father and a scapegrace brother of hers, who is forthwith coming home to grasp the larger portion of the goods with which the gods have endowed the Millards.

The blue eyes and golden hair, which created such a sensation, having buried their gleam and glitter in the shades of Glenholme so happily, there is little more to be told at present about their owner.

But of Ethel this much may be gathered from Miss Bertram's parting address to society, when leaving it for a while after that 'very painful affair at Burnsideigh.'

'My second niece, Ethel Eldon, will be with me next season; quite a child at present, but with such beauty in her hazel hair and brown-velvet eyes, that Daisy's quieter light will be completely put out. Happily there are no more young squires in that part of the world to interfere with Ethel's prospects, and cause me the agony of disappointment which I suffered from Daisy's foolish *mésalliance*.'

SOME EAST ANGLIAN WORTHIES.

PEOPLE who are exhausted by the wear and tear and worry of business, crushed under heavy burdens, feeling the lassitude which succeeds great sorrow, or who seek in any way to soothe a sore heart with the solaces of rest and quiet, combined with a little quaint life of not too exciting a nature, cannot well do better than turn their footsteps towards Normundham, a little East Anglian townlet fifty years behind the times, where they can wander free as air along the sandy dunes, watch the surf rolling in from the North Sea, or stand beside the fishermen and boys on the shore, and watch them throwing their long lines with unerring precision far into the briny depths, and drawing in fish after fish till they have half a dozen great cod lying on the shingle at either side their feet, to say nothing of smaller fry, which hardly count for anything in their estimation, though the good wives would tell you that they help to keep the pot boiling and the children fed.

The harvest of the seas which wash our Eastern coasts is particularly rich and abundant, as the Baroness Burdett-Coutts probably knew when she built Columbia Market, with rails running into it from the Great Eastern line, hoping thereby to bring vast supplies of the finny food which is prepared for man without his care or labour, which comes to his net or line fat and well nourished, from its happy hunting-grounds beneath the waves, within reach of the throngs of

weakly, starving, struggling creatures who herd together in the purlieus of Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, and Whitechapel. Why she did not succeed the smack-owners and fish-salesmen of Billingsgate can tell you, with a sly laugh, as they finish their day's money-making before civilised London turns out of its bed, and drive home in well-appointed 'traps' to the trimmest of residences to be found in any part of the suburbs. To return to Normundham and its fisher-folk, descendants of a Norse colony, as tradition says, and who bear out the truth of the story in their tall stature, blue eyes, and hair red enough for any Olaf or Ericsson who ever sailed the foaming seas or harried Christian hamlets.

You need not turn to *Bradshaw* in quest of the name, for you may search its pages through in vain, and make endless inquiries of the officials at Liverpool-street, without being able to gain the slightest modicum of intelligence about it, though it may be that some will put together first one and then another touch of Nature, and think they recognise the features of old friends who led simple lives in 'silly Suffolk' at that remote period in the Golden Age when at least for them and their contemporaries all the world was young.

In the early days of the Eastern Counties Railway, as it was then called, the line was open only as far as Bishop Stortford, and that well-appointed coach, the High-flyer, which ran between London

and Bury St. Edmund's, used to be mounted on a truck with all its freight of inside and outside passengers, and conveyed by train to the former town, where it was taken possession of by four spanking grays, and driven along the level turnpikes at a pace as nearly approaching that of King Steam as the coachman dared to attain without risking the lives of his horseflesh and the limbs of his patrons; and it was on a wild wet March evening that I first exchanged this mode of conveyance for a gig which awaited me at Bury, saw my trunks consigned to a tumbril, and drove nine miles with a cousin I had never seen before to his house at Normundham. How pitilessly the east wind blew over the flat land, and drove the sleet in our faces, I shall never forget; nor yet, when we entered the town, how the gusts rushed up the narrow scores, bringing with them a strong odour of herrings, making toys of whatever stray bits of our apparel it could find to sport with, and almost taking sturdy Dobbin off his four substantial legs. Right glad was I when we stopped before a door near the top of the street, which was opened by an ancient serving-woman in the garb of a Quakeress, and I was taken down a long passage into an octagonal hall running the whole height of the house, with a fine oak ceiling, and doors opening in it to rooms below, while a wide staircase led to a gallery which went all round and conducted to the bedrooms above. Through one of the lower doors I was ushered into a cosy sitting-room, with a cheerful fire and well-spread supper-table, where a dignified-looking woman in rich black silk and snowy cap and kerchief rose from her chair, gave me a kindly welcome, and bade Rachel take off my wet

wraps and see to all my creature comforts. When my feet and hands were sufficiently thawed to enable me to make sure that those appendages to my person were still in their normal position, I was taken to my room, which looked somewhat eerie in the dim candlelight, and quaint enough to have been Dorothy Vernon's chamber in Haddon Hall. The uneven polished floor felt slippery to my unaccustomed feet, the great four-post bed looked hearse-like with its dark hangings, a heavy curtain fell over the tall door, and a red fire burned in a species of basket placed in the recess of a fireplace bordered with blue-and-white Dutch tiles, which immediately made me think of Dr. Watts, who is said to have precociously learned his scripture history from similar rude pictures at such another hearth.

I may as well here explain that my host, the Rev. John Joseph Cadogan, was my father's second cousin and rector of the parish of Normundham, and that he had married Ruth Gurney, a scion of one of the great Quaker families of East Anglia, and that part—a very small part—of her dower had been the curious house in which they lived, while the parsonage, an edifice consisting of five rooms and a cowhouse, was used as the abode of the infants' schoolmistress. Although Ruth had married a clergyman of the Established Church and honoured him and his calling with her whole soul, she retained her early habits, did not care to be called *Mrs.* Cadogan, adhered to the pathetic, homelike, tender *tutelage* of her people, and their richly sober dress. Her tastes were æsthetic, and she employed her childless leisure in art: her painting-room was one of the pleasantest in the house, and her

pictures were eagerly coveted and much prized by her neighbours, to whom she gladly gave them, seeing that there was no longer any available space on her own walls where a picture could be hung. Of her artistic performances perhaps those who loved her were but partial judges; she worked very rapidly, and grew tired of her subject if it was on hand too long. She was a very absent woman, and sometimes forgot when visitors were coming; but her peculiarities were well known, and her delinquencies forgiven in consideration of her genuine goodness, cleverness, and singleness of heart. The times I liked best were those when she had ordered her household for the day, cut out and distributed her Dorcas-work, been to see her sick people, and was ready to take a stroll with me in the terraced garden gay with daffodils and polyanthus, and interest me with her reminiscences of Elizabeth Fry, Dr. Priestley, Mr. Wilberforce, and Rowland Hill, and launch forth occasionally in praise of her beloved John Joseph. His very name pleased her because it savoured of her own family, and she made me call her Cousin Ruth, which latter, she averred, was a sweeter appellation than even the much-esteemed and time-honoured Mary.

On the first morning after my arrival I was taken all over the house, of which its owner was very proud indeed. She showed me the little chamber, which could only be reached by ascending the wide dining-room chimney, in which an ardent Jacobite was said to have been hidden for three weeks; exhibited a table in the same apartment, which must have been made where it stood, as it would have been perfectly impossible for it to be brought in by

either door or window; took me into a bedroom where Queen Elizabeth was said to have slept for a night; and asked me to take the covers off great china jars of *pot-pourri*, that the house might be filled with the odour of their contents. Then I went out to gather a bunch of violets for her work-table, and finally placed myself at a window, and was gazing down the wind-swept street, when I beheld advancing up the middle at a sober pace a rusty-looking pony-chaise, occupied by the fattest man I ever saw. He filled the solitary seat, looked rubicund and jolly, and wore what was then very uncommon—a black-stuff cassock, surmounted by a species of cloak, which left his hands free and his portly person well exposed to view.

‘Quick, cousin Ruth,’ quoth I, ‘and tell me who is this?’

‘We call him Friar Tuck,’ said she; ‘and he is sure to stay and dine, so thou wilt see how well he merits his name. He is a good man, and kind to the poor, and does not heed our little jokes.’

He drove round to the stable, was closeted for an hour or two with John Joseph in his study, and joined us when the early dinner-bell was heard.

‘Art thou ready for thy food?’ asked Ruth, in her silvery voice.

‘Yea, verily,’ he answered, falling into her manner of speech, as those did who were much with her; ‘dost thou not know of old that I am invariably hungry, and ready to eat at any hour of day or night?’

‘My dear,’ said Mr. Cadogan, ‘our friend’s troubles are great; last night’s gale blew a huge piece of thatch off the roof of his church, and the thatcher is so busy repairing similar damages that he cannot promise to get the mischief

mended before Sunday, and he knows not what to do.'

'Knows not what to do!' she repeated; 'why does he not ask us to help him? Does thee think the large tarpauling that has not been used since hay-time would cover the hole? If it will, we can send it by Joshua, and he can get a ladder and fork it down over the opening, and not a drop will go through.'

Friar Tuck expressed his grateful thanks, and told her she always knew how to assist her neighbours better than any one else, and then applied himself diligently to a plate of fat capon, which seemed the ideal dish for a man of his gastronomic capacities. In the intervals of eating he amused us very much by his vivid descriptions of a scene which had taken place at his church a few weeks previously. For months and years he had vainly endeavoured to awaken the slumbering conscience of one of his farmer's wives to the necessity of performing that portion of her weekly duty which consisted in a proper and exemplary attendance at church. She, on her part, invariably made excuse, and her stock obstacle to a due observance of the Sabbath was the need of looking after her flock of geese, though it was occasionally varied by the wants of the baby or a sick cow. However, on the Sunday in question, being wearied by the parson's importunities, she resolved to make an attempt at killing two birds with one stone by driving her geese into the churchyard, and sitting down in the porch to watch them. When the clergyman entered he was rather amazed at so unusual a mode of proceeding, and begged that she would so far leave her worldly cares behind as to come inside, observing that geese were creatures much belied,

and not nearly so silly as they seemed, and could very well take care of themselves while she sat in her pew.

'No, no,' said she; 'I can hear you well enough out here, and that will do for me.'

Seeing that she was not to be persuaded, he went on, and commenced the service. All went well during the prayers, the variety of which amused her; but soon after the commencement of the sermon her active mind was soothed to sleep, and one adventurous goose, taking advantage of her slumbers, stretched his neck out cautiously, and, meeting with no hindrance, passed by her into church. His comrades, cackling, followed, and woke Dame Perkins from her nap. Her efforts to collect her errant flock and the effect on the risible muscles of the congregation may be better imagined than described; and in the hubbub that ensued Friar Tuck was fain to cut short his address, came to the conclusion that prudence was the better part of valour, and resolved to leave Mrs. Perkins to her own devices for the future. A smaller-minded man would have been disconcerted; but he laughed merrily at his own discomfiture; and when, in his old age, Tennyson's *Northern Farmer* was published, he enjoyed it to the utmost, and told his friends that he was sure the worthy who 'stubbed Thornaby wéast' must have been made of the same material as Dame Perkins.

The then bishop of the Eastern see was on terms of great intimacy with the Cadogans. Ruth was an especial favourite of his, and she delighted to do him honour, always in the spirit, and, when she did not forget it, in the letter also. On one occasion it was arranged that he should preach a

sermon for the parish schools, and drove over from his palace, which was not many miles distant, to the church, intending to walk back with us afterwards to dinner.

During service I observed that Ruth's usually placid countenance was troubled, and no sooner were we out of the church than she whispered,

'I quite forgot who was coming, and there is only our regular Sunday joint of cold beef, and it looks so dreadfully inhospitable.'

I endeavoured to reassure her by saying that the beef was always the best of its kind. But she was exceedingly dissatisfied with herself, and presently left me to walk home with John Joseph and his guest, while she went to the house of a respectable tradesman, who was one of the churchwardens. After a few minutes I saw her leave his door and proceed to another, and while I was taking off my bonnet she came to my room and said,

'I have got out of my difficulty, dear. Both those good people on whom I called have lent me their Sunday dinner. They had something else in the house to make shift with; so I shall have two hot dishes besides the cold sirloin. Is it not kind of them?'

She despatched Rachel downstairs with a message to this effect; and forthwith the bell rang, and we descended to the dining-room, where John Joseph and the bishop were already standing at the window, and comparing notes on the arrival of the summer migrants, for they were both ornithologists. And indeed that lamented prelate is to this day known to a considerable section of the world as the 'bird-bishop.'

'The cuckoo was unusually early this year,' said he, as we entered; 'I heard him first on the 7th of April at Thorpe.'

'And I saw swallows on the 13th, and a wryneck on the 24th,' rejoined Mr. Cadogan.

'On May-day I saw the first sedge warbler,' added Dr. —.

'Put up thy pocket-book and come to dinner,' broke in Ruth cheerily. 'I want to hear about the birds by and by, but we must not let our fare get cold.'

So we seated ourselves at the sociable round table, and I being in the secret awaited the uncovering of the viands with some curiosity. Judge then of my surprise and Ruth's dismay when the covers were removed, and two editions of the savoury and popular Suffolk dish familiarly known as 'a toad-in-a-hole' were exposed to view! There was nothing for it but for the hostess to confess her shortcomings and join in the laugh against herself, while Dr. — declared that it was a capital joke, for whenever he and his wife had the rare good fortune to enjoy a quiet little *tête-à-tête* dinner, he invariably stipulated that a toad-in-a-hole should be provided for the occasion. So we fell to merrily, and were soon enjoying the bishop's history of his dinner the week before at another place in his diocese, the incumbent of which had just brought home his third wife, a raw-boned Scotchwoman who was of the very straitest sect of the Pharisees with regard to Sabbath observances. She had, however, so far relaxed in honour of the bishop's presence as to add some hot soup to the cold dinner which was in her opinion the only consistent regimen for a clergyman's household on the first day of the week. This unlucky soup had been so dreadfully burnt during the cook's absence at church that it had to be sent untasted from table, and Mrs. Tibbie's *malapropos* ejaculation when the lid of the tureen was lifted, and

she smelt the mischief, was, 'The bishop's foot's in it! Happily Dr. — was acquainted with this Scotch saying and its origin in days when episcopal intrusion was keenly felt and resented by the Covenanters, and understood that her allusion was purely impersonal, but he remembered and told it as a good story to the end of his life.

None of us, however gifted, are good at everything, and our right reverend friend, though he was a great authority on the history and habits of the birds of the air and the government of a diocese, indulged in very curious ideas on some other subjects. We next met him at an archaeological meeting, at which the much-disputed question of the origin of the round towers of England and Ireland, one of which is to be seen at Burgh, was mooted and discussed at considerable length, without any one present being able to come to a more satisfactory conclusion on the subject than before. Those who held that these extraordinary structures were remnants of an ancient fire-worship preponderated, as far as I remember, but the bishop was not one of them. He sat and pondered over what he heard, revolving all possible difficulties in the way of everybody's view, and at length came to the decision that none of the theories which had as yet been propounded would hold water. He then advanced one of his own, which, as he thought, was open to no objections, and rose triumphant over every obstacle.

'My explanation meets all difficulties,' said the good man. 'I believe those round towers to have been wells of fabulous depth, sunk in prehistoric times and bricked round with the most solid masonry; nothing like it to be seen in our days, you know. Well, the

land changes from time to time, and from various causes. In some places it slips, in others the sea recedes, and in others again it encroaches. I cannot help thinking that in these instances it has sunk, actually *sunk*, my dear sir, away from the brickwork, which now stands above the surface as a round tower, and puzzles men's minds as to its origin and purpose.'

Thus he addressed the assembled *virtuosos*, and among others my cousins, who were local authorities on such matters, and though he knew that they took an interest in what he had to say, past experience had taught him that they did not invariably agree with him on all points; but as a bishop does not every day mix with those who dare to differ from him, this added a keener zest to his conversation with them than was to be found in his ordinary intercourse with the non-episcopal world.

John Joseph tried hard to reason with him on the improbability of his case, but without success; the new idea was ultimately embodied in a paper to be read before the Society of Antiquaries on one of their Thursday evenings at Somerset House, but somehow it was overlooked and sank into oblivion before the excitement created by a great discovery. Another member had a most wonderful find of torques, rings, seals, and what Burns calls by the general name of 'auld nick-nackets,' which was turned up by a labourer while excavating for an ice-house in his shrubbery, which occupied the attention of the society till the end of the London season, to the exclusion of all other topics of interest. I did hear afterwards that this treasure-trove was wilfully kept longer than needful on the *tapis* because some of the bishop's most affectionate friends

felt that neither the world nor their right reverend brother's reputation for wisdom would suffer by the loss of the paper on the origin of round towers.

But I must revert from my cousin's friends to their household, and their faithful maid Rachel, who had been Ruth's personal attendant before her marriage, and the devoted servant of both husband and wife afterwards. The good John Joseph was gathered to his fathers after a happy wedded life of thirty years, and Rachel helped her mistress to nurse him through his long illness with a devotion which could neither be forgotten nor repaid. The time came, however, when this good and loyal creature, after nearly half a century of willing service, lost her mind, and must have been sent to a lunatic asylum if it had not been for Ruth. Her wanderings were of a most innocent kind, and showed a peculiarly guileless spirit. She could not be restrained from going to church twice every Sunday as long as her strength lasted, and behaved most decorously throughout the morning service; but when it came to afternoon prayers she invariably rose and left the building at the first words of the 'Nunc Dimittis.' 'Why do they stay?' she would say. "'Now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace :'" that is surely the time for me and all to go, when He giveth peace, His peace that passeth understanding; so I get me up and go to my dear mistress and my peaceful home.' She was much oppressed by a gentle melancholy, which was very depressing to those around; but through it all Ruth kept and tended her, had her mostly in her own sitting-room by day, and in her dressing-room at night. An attendant was near to wait upon her, and thus he journeyed daily by slow half-

conscious stages towards the Silent Land.

John Joseph had been interred in a simple grass-green grave just outside the weather-beaten chancel of his ancient church, and a similar space was reserved and marked out where his widow might lay down and sleep once more beside him; and it was in the centre between and below that she buried Rachel at her master's feet. The distance from her house to the churchyard was not great, but the infirmities of age were gaining ground, and it was too far for her to walk; so she was drawn in her wheeled chair down the street behind the coffin as chief mourner, to see the last of her faithful friend and servant.

One often hears it said that the tried old servitor whose master's interest was his own has become extinct, and been hurried out of the world by the march of education and progress; but hearts are the same in all ages, and if we would look on our domestics as brethren, put ourselves in their place, and do by them as we would be done by, we might still receive an affectionate and reasonable service at their hands, even as some of our forefathers did.

I paid cousin Ruth one more visit after the death of Rachel. Her eyesight was wonderfully good, and she still handled her brushes, and did a little painting at odd times. She was always ready to talk about her loved and lost ones, and enjoyed tolerable health, though it was impossible not to feel that the silver cord was loosening, and the King's messenger on his way. He came ere long, and for her the dawn brightened and the shadows fled. Peace to her ashes! She was the last of the trio who rest under the storm-worn chancel, with their faces towards the sunrise.

I, too, have long since toiled
to the summit of the hill of life,
and am making my way surely,
if slowly, downwards; but I would
fain visit and bid farewell to one
and all of the old landmarks be-
fore I reach the foot and cross the
river. Last week I stood by the
bird-bishop's tomb, just at that
spot in his cathedral-floor where
the mingled colours fall from the
western window, gorgeous as the
hues on a peacock's neck or the

breast of a humming-bird. Then
I gathered daisies from the triple
graves at Normundham, and finally
sat and pondered by the sea, as it

'Still laughs to the rosy shells ashore,
And the shore still shines in the lustre of
the wave,
Though the beauty and the joyance of
the early days is o'er,
And many of the beautiful are quiet in
the grave;
And they who come again
Wear brows of care and pain,
And wander, sad and silent, by the melan-
choly main.'

E. C.

THE MERMAIDEN.

THEY say that a Mermaid combs her hair

Under the wave of the western sea,
Where the Sun sinks down to his couch at night

Into the wave so fierce and free :
Then the wind is hushed on the turbulent deep,
And the waters are silent, and all things asleep.

Sailors sailing over the main,

Over the wave of the western sea,
Tell of a strange unearthly strain

Floating past them dreamily :
It sings in the shrouds ; they know it well ;
But what it sings of, none may tell.

A gleam of beauty, a sound of love,

Is seen, is heard, on the western sea ;
A radiance about the brow of Eve ;

A note of far-off minstrelsy.
Ah, who can tell what this thing may be,
Which is seen, which is heard, on the western sea ?

The wayward waters rush and roll

On the restless wave of the western sea ;
But no sign from above, no voice from below,
From the depths may tell what this can be.
I only know of the sunset-light,
And that voices float on the wings of night.

G. M.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.
2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.
3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.
4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.
5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. XIII.—TRIPLE ACROSTIC.

[The initial, central, and final letters form three words.]

'Tis novel certainly, my first,
And any time may be my second.
Friends think my third among the worst
Of human evils should be reckoned.
If peaceful arts all fail our need
My whole may probably succeed.

- I. My first will do ;
- II. My second, too ;
- III. For this my third
Is just the word.

THIETA.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the December Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by November the 11th.

ANSWER TO No. XII. (DOUBLE ACROSTIC).

1. R	I	G	O	L
2. U	M	B	R	A
3. S	P	I	N	O
4. S	L	A	V	
5. E	Y	N	E	
6. T	A	U	R	S

EXPLANATORY NOTES.—Light 1. *Second Part of Henry IV.*, act iv. scene 4.
Light 5. *Antony and Cleopatra*, act ii. scene 7.

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aces, Alma, Araba, Bon Gualtier, Cadwallader, C O M, General Buncombe, Hazlewood, Kanitbeko, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Pud, Racer, Shaitân, The Borogoves, Try, and Verulam—17 correct, and 33 incorrect: 50 in all.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Reynard.—See Classical Dictionary for 'Enna,' and for 'Neobule' under 'Lycambes.'

Raca, Cadwallader, and Verulam.—'Tones' is not admissible. There are hundreds of tones; no intimation was given that the meaning was limited to musical tones. The light is a catch, and a very perfect one. 'Yet' is used in its ordinary sense of 'nevertheless.' Paraphrased, the meaning is: 'These are but seven, nevertheless they were always between twelve and twenty.'

Aces.—The word 'Manna' (Hebrew) means 'What is it?' Modern manna is made from ashes, i.e. ash-tress. Magnesia does not 'come from ashes'; it can scarcely even be described as the ashes of magnesium, and does not at all answer to the words, 'And is—What is it?'

LONDON SOCIETY

DECEMBER 1878.

THE EDUCATION OF THE STREETS.

I THINK it was the late Sir Robert Peel, who, in the course of an education debate in the House of Commons, spoke of the education of the streets. The great statesman used the expression in a very simple and elementary way. Those were the days before School Boards, and he only meant that besides schooling there were other ways in which children picked up education. They could look at pictures in the shops; they could spell out the big letters on the posters; they could take count of all they saw and heard; through a hundred avenues information and ideas would be flowing in upon them. In these days we think it a great thing to take children out of the streets and send them to school. The education grant used to be a mere item; but now it is one of the heaviest portions of our expenditure, and, we may trust, in the long-run the most remunerative. But still there is an education of the streets incessantly going on, not limited to childhood nor debarred from age; an education moral, intellectual, dramatic, and social. The ladies are the keenest and most deserving scholars in this special education. Few men care to 'go out shopping' with them. We wretched men have a mysterious instinct, akin to that of the lower

animals, in the region of the breeches-pocket, and explain the feminine gazing at a shop-window by the theory of the organ of acquisitiveness. But this is by no means generally the case. The ladies' delicate and exact taste is busy with all the rare and radiant objects of the great London bazaar. To them the rich contents of the shops behind the long lines of plate glass are a veritable picture-gallery, a wondrous diorama. We speak of Great Exhibitions; but London has a Great Exhibition all the year round to those who, even through the shop-windows, will examine the products of all parts of the earth heaped together in the emporia of the City and the West-end. Wherever there is the appreciation of beauty or utility, the desire of novelty, the thirst for information, a process of education is constantly going on in the streets of a great city.

What an infinite amount of instruction, if your mind readily yields itself to the laws of association, can be derived from the London streets! To people who know English literature and history, all the stones of these streets are eloquent. A whole population of ghosts haunt the immemorial pavement. You may learn or remember something at every step. Why, the very tavern signboards have their story:

the White Horse Cellar, the Golden Cross, the Cock, the Cheshire Cheese. Some commemorate great victories and great commanders. The vans have names known in Parliament and all over the world: Chaplin & Horne, Bass and Allsopp, W. H. Smith & Son, and others which you pass in all the great thoroughfares. As you lately watched the people gather in front of the shops containing war maps, noticing how the tiny flags advance or recede, you thought how many had first thus formulated their geographical notions of the south-east of Europe. The passer-by may get a distinct lesson at each picture-shop and at each book-seller's. At some shop you see the neat packing-cases directed to some far-off address in India or Australia. As you go to the gun-shop you meet men discussing how they have followed the large game in Africa or the shore-shooting in Holland. At the mercer's you have all the associations of births, deaths, and marriages around you: the bride-elect and the expectant bridesmaids are selecting the white and colours, and contrasting with the gay sponsalia is all the dark luxury of grief. At the jeweller's the happy youngster is selecting the ring, or perhaps a mighty order for jewelry is being given for the young lady who is being married and leaving England for years. The very gold and gems are suggestive of far-off countries and remote histories. As you look through the barred windows of the money-changer's, you may get a lesson in coinage and currency. As you walk from Charing Cross to St. Paul's Churchyard you have specimens of all the nationalities. You meet the Chinese and the Japanese, the Turk, the negro, and may catch a jabber of all European tongues.

You pass the offices of the great newspapers, with their organised network of information all over the globe; the offices of great societies which are combating with moral evil wherever their operations can extend. Even the very notices that are officially posted up are interesting. An oratorio of Handel's is to be performed at Exeter Hall—of Handel, who for anxious disappointed years could win no attention for his heavenly notes. Here a great modern historian is stepping out of his study to lecture the world on the well-worn theme of the influence of climate upon the national characteristics. You pass by the 'Discussion' Forum which frightened Louis Napoleon with the idea of conspiracies. The London markets alone give practical education, not only to the sharp little street Arabs who sleep in the baskets, but to any one who makes a set expedition to investigate them. Covent Garden is best in the morning, with all the sweet scents and sights of the earliest flowers and fruits; Billingsgate gives you the edible fish of many seas, and Leadenhall Market the furred and feathered game of many lands. These last are best visited at opportune times, when you may bring home a heavy bag, furnished as if by the best of sportsmen. It is quite a lesson in natural history to count up the birds and fishes.

But the streets 'give us more than the education of fact and information. Indeed, we all ought to know that education is something different from instruction. Instruction means putting something in, and education means drawing something out. Now the education of the streets, beyond the knowledge of facts observed, elicits and sharpens the powers of observation and comparison. It

teaches people to be careful, accurate, and civil. Napoleon, in his conversations in St. Helena, would never admit that he had ever done any harm by the bloodshed of his wars. He said that war was a very good thing. 'It made people sharp.' Now there is a kind of guerrilla warfare going on in the London streets which has a tendency to make people sharp. Indeed, every year there are enough accidents in these London streets to make up a tolerably sanguinary engagement. A man certainly learns the practical use of his eyes and ears, and how to take heed literally that his footsteps slip not. It is all very well for lawyers and judges to say that the road as well as the pavement is the property of the public, and that drivers of vehicles have no right to inconvenience those who want to cross the street. This is a very poor consolation when a man finds himself knocked over by a hansom or a fast-driven cart. Until manslaughter of this kind is punished, there will be several thousand persons killed or maimed annually in the London streets. So the streets may teach us quietude, directness, caution, and tact. It is quite as well, though, that there are policemen stationed in the middle of the roads to help incautious people to pass the crossings. Now there is something at times which is very noticeable and interesting in the passing of a crossing. I have seen a delicately-nurtured lady step back and take a blind man by the arm and convoy him across the road. Pleasant, too, to see little children taken by the hand or lifted in the arms to make the passage safe and easy to them. I have heard one case which actually led to a marriage through kindly help given in the crossing of a street. In fact, there is a

great deal of character to be seen in the way in which people walk. There is the quiet, courteous, graceful walk, and a blustering assertive walk. An old story illustrates the difference: 'I don't give the wall to every snob,' said one of the last kind. 'But I do,' was the quiet and cutting rejoinder, if the fellow had only the sense to see it.

As a rule, people in London move quickly and silently. There is an ever-shifting diorama, a moving picture-gallery. As men pass on about their business, they seem entirely intent on that and that alone. Men glide by often with serpentine sinuosity of movement. Mr. Tennyson must have acutely watched the streets when he makes his City clerk say:

'My eyes
Pursued him down the street, and far
away,
Among the honest shoulders of the
Read rascal in the motions of his back,
And scoundrel in the supple-sliding
knee.'

The fact is that, amid all the constant moving to and fro, the passers-by are all along thoroughly observant and keenly critical. Anything unusual in man or woman would be instantaneously noticed. There is, indeed, a lore of the human countenance and the human heart. Sometimes we see faces that revolt us at once; all the grace and music of life appear utterly blotted out. We see evil faces that might belong to lost angels. Sometimes, on the other hand, we see faces of singular spiritual beauty.

This idea of the streets being a picture-gallery was a very familiar one to that great painter, Leonardo da Vinci. We are told that 'through long days he would follow up and down the streets of Florence or Milan beautiful unknown faces, learning them by heart, interpreting their changes

of expression, reading the thoughts through the features.' 'These,' says Mr. Symonds (*Renaissance in Italy*), 'he afterwards committed to paper. We possess many such sketches—a series of ideal portraits, containing each an unsolved riddle that the master read; a procession of shadows, cast by reality, that, entering the *camera lucida* of the artist's brain, gained new and spiritual quality. In some of them his fancy seems to be imprisoned in labyrinths of hair; in others, the eyes deep with feeling, or hands with gem-like brilliancy, have caught it, or the lips that tell and hide so much, or the nostrils quivering with momentary emotion.' The keen-eyed of the London streets, according to the measure of their experience, will repeat the experience of Da Vinci.

The streets in the busy hours of day have much to excite our curiosity and wonder. For some, the silent hours of night are equally instructive. Not long since, a distinguished statesman told how his thoughts had been deepened and his purposes strengthened by riding through London in a cab at two o'clock in the morning. 'A flash of inspiration' it was called at the time; and though some may consider that the fact of three million human beings uttering simultaneous snores is an incident which scarcely rises above the prosaic, yet even these unemotional critics will acknowledge that the deserted streets have suggestive hints to offer.

But it is the crowded streets that we want to speak of, and their busy scenes of activity. Of all the curious phenomena of metropolitan life, a London crowd is the strangest. Whether it be assembled round the lions of Trafalgar-square, to debate the expedi-

mentarily modifying the

Constitution of the realm; or has been gathered together at the corner of the street, to learn from some public instructor in what way sixpence and a wedding-ring folded in a piece of paper may be sold for a penny, and a reasonable profit realised: whatever may be the purpose for which it has met, it will always possess certain characteristics to show its family likeness to other crowds. Both sexes will be represented, all ages will be present; and the weakest both in age and sex, hysterical ladies and helpless babies, are sure to muster the strongest where the danger of being crushed is the greatest. It will probably be observed, too, that about half the crowd will have a very vague idea of the purpose for which it has assembled. We have all heard of that humorous individual who stood still in the Strand, with his eyes fixed upon the horizontal tail of the lion on Northumberland House, until a huge crowd gathered round him and likewise stared at the harmless effigy; and it requires very little observation to assure us that the experiment would probably meet with equal success if it were again attempted. You have but to stop at any street crowd and inquire what it is that is exciting so much attention, and you will probably be told by the person to whom you apply for information that he is 'trying to find out:' he thinks there must be some unusual cause to make so many men stand still, and does not consider for a moment how many there are who are 'trying to find out' for what purpose they are waiting.

It is interesting to see how those acute observers, the novelists, take these things. They, we may believe, have eyes for the crowded streets, their picture-gallery, and their drama. This is

what Mrs. Gaskell says in that first and powerful story of hers, *Mary Barton*: 'It is a pretty sight to walk through a street with lighted shops; the gas is so brilliant, the display of goods so much more vividly shown than by day; and of all shops a druggist's looks the most like the tales of our childhood, from Aladdin's garden of enchanted fruits to the charming Rosamond with her purple jar. . . You cannot read the lot of those who daily pass by you in the street. How do you know the wild romances of their lives; the trials, the temptations they are even now enduring, resisting, sinking under? You may be elbowed one instant by the girl desperate in her abandonment, laughing in mad merriment, with her outward gesture, while her soul is longing for the rest of the dead, and bringing itself to think of the cold flowing river as the only mercy of God remaining to her here. You may pass the criminal, meditating crimes at which you will to-morrow shudder with horror as you read them. You may push against one, humble and unnoticed, the last upon earth, who in Heaven will for ever be in the immediate light of God's countenance. Errands of mercy—errands of sin—did you ever think where all the thousands of people you daily meet are bound? I see, too, that Dr. MacDonald, in his last story, *The Marquis of Lossie*, has something to say about the streets. He says of his hero, the grave marquis: 'He took to scrutinising the faces that passed him, trying to understand them. To his surprise he found that almost every one reminded him of somebody he had known before, though he could not always identify the likeness.' The experience of many will coincide with Dr. MacDonald. For

a moment we seem to recognise a face. But it is not an individual face, but the type of the face, that we recognise. In fact there are many people advanced in life who, hearing of some new-comer, will say at once, 'Who is he like?' Consciously or unconsciously, we all recognise the types and make our classifications.

In certain localities we look out for certain people. If some ladies are so charming that it is a liberal education to know them, so the sight of persons whose names are historic help us to realise the character of our times. People used to watch Macaulay rolling, in Johnson's fashion, along the streets, and, as a *Times* critic said, muttering half aloud the sentences which were destined one day to astonish and delight the world. Sometimes there may be a reflected interest. 'I confess,' said a friend to the writer one day, 'I felt very proud when I walked down Parliament-street arm-in-arm with a Cabinet Minister.' The crowd always looks with keen interest on a Cabinet Minister. Who excites a livelier interest at the present time than Lord Beaconsfield? It is quite part of a man's education to know him well by sight. In Parliament-street and Pall Mall, as well as in Rotten Row, you may see the celebrities of the day. And not only this, but I have a quaint fancy of my own in singling out different people in the streets, and thinking that they are just the sort of people who would realise the characters of fiction. As I pass by Somerset House I am sure that I see Jack Eames and Mr. Crosby coming out of those vast portals; and little Kate Nickleby is tripping along in the fresh morning air to get to Miss Knagg's; and there are Thackeray's old Eastern warriors pulling their moustaches in front

of the bay windows of the club; there also are plenty of the rogues of all professions—popular persons, humbugging doctors, and lawyers of the Quirk, Gammon, and Snap species. Who goes along Goswell-street without thinking of Mr. Pickwick, or into the old Inns of Court without thinking of Warrington and Pendennis? One day I was in the east of London, and a clergyman took me with him a little distance until we got into a dingy street. With the utmost solemnity he pointed across it. 'There,' he said, 'Mr. Micawber used to live.' To him, Mr. Micawber, whether an airy creation of genius or simply a portraiture of Mr. Dickens's own father, was a far more real and substantial personage than any person who actually lived in the street.

But it is the leisurely kind of man who walks the streets deliberately who sees most of their by-play and reaps the largest harvest of impressions. I know a man who is always getting into adventures in the streets. In these days, when we are all shaken out of the conventional bag of society like so many smooth marbles, it is something to get hold of an adventure. My friend loves the Strand and Fleet-street and the sweet shady side of Pall Mall. He regularly takes his walks abroad with the intention of contemplating human nature as it appears in the London streets. He takes his time about it. He knows hundreds of people by sight; he can describe their avocations, read off their characters, and tell how they progress or retrocede as the years go on. I think he must have the most affable of countenances. Ladies go up to him and ask him the way if they have missed it. One day a young man walked up to him in the street and begged his

advice. It was about his sister, a young lady who wished to get a judicial separation from her husband, who treated her cruelly. One day an old lady asked him to take her ticket for her to a railway station in the country, as she had lost her purse. It turned out to be a very lucky railway ticket for him. This is not an unusual application in the London streets, but my friend's rule is to make an appointment at the railway station five minutes before the train starts. As a rule the appointment is not kept. He is as skilful as a Parisian *chiffonnier* in picking up even a scrap of paper if it looks important, and that is a fortunate wretch whose purse or parcel has fallen within his ken. Like Cuvier constructing a whole body from a bird, from snatches of conversation he can put together a whole story. He knows by sight each artist and journalist and every man of mark about town. He is a bit of a Bohemian in his nature; and when Bohemian meets Bohemian then comes the tug, not of war, but of friendship, with an adjournment to club or bar-parlour. He picks up the last rumour, the latest news, the current criticism, the tone and feeling of the day, and will, in fact, confess that he gets the best of his daily education in the streets.

One comes to understand the fascination of the London streets, of that tide of life which Elia loved, and which, as Johnson said, 'is highest at Charing Cross.' I can understand the feeling of the Londoner who was obliged to live in the country, and had the flagging of a pavement laid down, and street-lamps put up, and people to run up and down in front of his house. Any one who has really experienced the joy and excitement of the London streets will never be satisfied to forego

them for once and all. And especially there is that highest moral teaching with which the streets are eloquent, that symbolism which they afford of the very highest truths. Do they not teach us much of justice and fair dealing and honest effort and great industrial triumphs? Do they not teach us much of catholicity and toleration and thankfulness and pity? They exhibit to us the infinite temptations to which life is liable, all the infinite play of human motive and movement. Our palaces of State tell us of law and order and politics; the portals stand open for the highest exhibitions of human genius in lyric, dramatic, artistic ranges; the proud Exchange collects the industries of the world, and thus reminds us that the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; and the solemn doors are open of abbey and cathedral, that silence or music may soothe us in the turmoil, and welcome us to meditation, repentance, and sacred resolve.

The streets have instruction for all. Their associations mould the characters of all. We have referred to the change which London life causes in the thoughts and disposition of the traditional countryman—a brood not extinct—who visits the metropolis; but though the influence is less marked, it is not less real on those who have been trained from infancy within the sound of Bow bells. We Londoners boast of our prudence, our cunning, our knowledge of men; and we say that for all this good sense we are indebted to experience. Which, as far it goes, is quite true; but we cannot tell when and where we obtained the experience. We know that the observation of years has accumulated for us a store of knowledge, and has developed in our minds

a tone of thought no less than a method of expression, yet we cannot trace the source whence it all sprang, the influence that called it into being. And so, for a great deal, we have to content ourselves with vague definitions, and attribute it to 'the man in the streets,' who has been continually educating us though we did not know it. To summarise his teaching is not very easy, for it is often contradictory though it has its salient features. Sometimes it is suggestive of kindly impulses and generous deeds; but ordinarily it eschews sentiment. It is very practical; and if the survival of the fittest is not always insured by it, it at least favours that law of natural selection which ordains that the weakest shall go to the wall and the strongest come forth to the front.

All this is a very necessary kind of instruction. The battle of life has to be fought, and stern necessity will require that we should at least understand the conditions of the conflict. The street comes like the Sibyl, and offers us leaves of precious instruction. Many have denounced it. De Quincey calls Oxford-street 'a stony-hearted stepmother;' and Tennyson's hero speaks of the 'long unlovely street,' and sings also:

'I hate the squares and streets
And the faces that one meets,
Hearts with no love for me.'

But their teaching, though severe, is kindly. The streets of London are not, indeed, paved with gold; although there are many City sites of which it is literally true, that if covered with gold this would not realise their value. But to many a one who has learned aright their sharp lessons, they have proved a high-road to fortune, and their sterile repellent tracts have not failed to yield some portion of fruits and flowers.

CHRISTMAS IN MOROCCO.

'To-morrow Christmas for Moros!' said the gentle Hamed, our Moorish servant, entering the room soon after the bang of the last sunset gun of Ramadan had shaken our windows, and the thick smoke of the coarse Moorish powder had floated away, temporarily obscuring the gorgeous hues bestowed by the retiring luminary on the restless waters of the South Atlantic.

'To-morrow Christmas for Moros! In the morning Hamed clean house, go for *soko*; then all day no *trabally*; have new *haik*, new slippers, walk about all same *tejjer*.'

By which little speech our faithful attendant meant to convey that to-morrow's rejoicing at the termination of the long and irksome fast of Ramadan was equivalent to the 'Ingleez's' Christmas, and that, after putting the house in order and bringing the provisions from the *soko*, or market, he would do no more *trabally*, or work—the word being a corruption of the Spanish *trabajo*—but would don the new *haik* and bright yellow slippers for which he had long been saving up, and to the purchase of which certain little presents from the children of our household had materially contributed; and would be entitled, by prescriptive holiday right, to 'take his walks abroad' with the *dolce far niente* dignity of a *tejjer*, or merchant.

I think we members of the little English community of Mogador—or, as the Moors fondly call this pleasantest town of the Moroccan seaboard, 'El Souërah,' or

The Beautiful—had almost as good reason as the Moslem population to rejoice at the termination of the great fast. The Moors not being allowed, during the holy month, to eat, drink, or smoke betwixt the rising and the setting of the sun—the more sternly orthodox even closing their nostrils against any pleasant odour that might casually perfume the air in their vicinity, and their ears against even the faintest sound of music—debarring themselves, in fact, from whatever could give the slightest pleasure to any of the senses, a considerable amount of gloom and listlessness was the inevitable result.

The servants in the various households, not over active and intelligent at the best of times, became, as the weary days of prayer and fasting wore on, appallingly idiotic, sleepy, and sullen, would do but little work, and that little never promptly nor well. Meals could not be relied on within an hour or two, rooms were left long untidy, essential little errands and messages unperformed, and a general gloomy confusion prevailed.

Did I, tempted by the smoothness of the sea, desire a little fishing cruise, and send a youthful Moor to the neighbouring rocks to get me a basket of mussels for bait, he would probably, directly he got outside the town-gates, deposit the basket and himself in the shade of the first wall he came to, and slumber sweetly till the tide had risen and covered all the rocky ledges where it was possible to collect bait. Had I

told the youngster overnight that he must come out to sea with me in the morning, and take care that my boat was put outside the dock, so that she would be afloat at a certain hour, I would find, on going down at daybreak with rods and tackle, that the boat was high and dry upon the mud, and it would take the united efforts of half a dozen Moors and myself to get her afloat at the end of nearly an hour's frantic struggling and pushing through mud and water, necessitating on my part the expenditure of a great amount of perspiration, not a little invective, and sundry silver coins.

And when we were fairly afloat my Mahometan youth would be so weak from fasting that his oar would be almost useless; and when we did, after an hour or so of the most ignominious zigzagging, reach our anchorage on one of the fishing-grounds, then would he speedily become sea-sick, and instead of helping me by preparing bait and landing fish, he would lean despairingly over the side in abject misery, and implore me to go home promptly—a piteous illustration of the anguish caused by an empty stomach contracting on itself.

Nor were these the only discomforts under which we groaned and grumbled.

From the evening when the eager lookers-out from minarets of mosques and towers of the fortifications first descried the new moon which ushered in the holy month of fasting, every sunset, as it flushed the far-off waves with purple and crimson and gold, and turned the fleecy cloudlets in the western sky to brightest jewels, and suffused the white houses and towers of Mogador with sweetest glow of pink, and gilded the green-tiled top of each tall minaret, had been accompanied by the roar of

a cannon from the battery just below our windows.

'What the deuce is that?' asked a friend of mine, lately arrived from England, as we strolled homewards one evening through the dusty streets, and the boom of the big gun suddenly fell upon his astonished ear.

'Only sunset,' I replied.

'Queer place this,' said J. 'Does the sun always set with a bang?'

'Always during Ramadan.'

'Does it rise with a bang too? I hate to be roused up early in the morning!'

'No, there is no gun at sunrise; but there is a very loud one at about three in the morning, or sometimes half-past, or four, or later.'

'Shocking nuisance!' remarked J. 'My bedroom window's just over that abominable battery.'

That early morning gun was a great trial, certainly. I would not have minded being *réveillé en sursaut*, as a Frenchman would say, and then turning comfortably over on the other side, and going to sleep again.

But somehow or other I always found myself awake half an hour or an hour before the time, and then I *could not* get to sleep again, but lay tossing about and fidgettily listening for the well-known din. At length I would hear a sound like the hum of an enormous fiendish nightmarish mosquito, caused by a hideous long tin trumpet, the shrill whistle of a fife or two, and the occasional tom-tomming of a Moorish drum. 'Ha, the soldiers coming along the ramparts; they will soon fire now.'

But the sound of the discordant instruments with which the soldiery solaced themselves in the night for their enforced abstinence from such 'sweet sounds' in the

day would continue for a long time before the red flash through my wide-open door would momentarily illumine my little chamber on the white flat roof, and then the horrid bang would rend the air, followed by a dense cloud of foul-smelling smoke; and then would my big dog Cæsar for several minutes rush frantically to and fro upon the roof in hot indignation, and utter deep-mouthed barks of defiance at the white figures of the 'Maghaseni,' as they flitted ghost-like along the ramparts below, and snort and pant and chafe and refuse to be pacified for a long time.

At the firing of the sunset gun the Moors were allowed to take a slight refection, which generally consisted of a kind of gruel. I have seen a Moorish soldier squatting in the street with a brass porringer in his lap, eagerly awaiting the boom of the cannon to dip his well-washed fingers in the mess.

At about 9 P.M. another slight meal was allowed to the true believers, and they might eat again at morning gun-fire, after which their mouths were closed against all 'fixings, solid and liquid,' even against the smallest draught of water or the lightest puff at the darling little pipe of dream-inducing *kief*.

On the twenty-seventh day of Ramadan we were informed that twenty-seven guns would be fired that night, and that we had better leave all our windows open, or they would certainly be broken by the violence of the discharge. This was pleasant; still more delightful was the glorious uncertainty which prevailed in the minds of our informants as to the time at which we might expect the infliction.

Some said that the twenty-seven guns would be fired before

midnight; Hamed opined that the cannonade would not take place till 3 or 4 A.M. Many of the guns on the battery in close proximity to our abode were in a fearfully rusty and honeycombed condition, so that apprehensions as to some of them bursting were not unnatural, and I thought it extremely probable that a few stray fragments might 'drop in' on me.

That night I burned the 'midnight oil,' and lay reading till nearly two, when sweet sleep took possession of me, from which I was awakened about four in the morning by a terrific bang that fairly shook the house.

A minute more, and there came a red flash and another bang, presently another. Thought I, 'I will go out and see the show;' so I went on to the flat white roof in my airy nocturnal costume, and leaning over the parapet looked down on to the platform of the battery below. A group of dim white figures, a flickering lantern, a glowing match, a touch at the breech of a rusty old gun, a swift skurry of the white figures round a corner, a squib-like fountain of sparks from the touch-hole, a red flash from the mouth, momentarily illumining the dark violet sea, a bang, and a cloud of smoke.

Then the white figures and the lantern appeared again; another squib, another flash, another bang, Cæsar galloping up and down over the roof, snorting his indignation, but not barking, probably because he felt 'unable to do justice to the subject;' and at length, after the eleventh gun had belched forth crimson flames and foul smoke, all was peace, save a distant discord of tin trumpets, *gouals* and *gimbris*, and I returned to my mosquito-haunted couch with a sigh of relief.

Pass we now to the eve of

'Christmas for Moros,' and let ethnologist and hagiologist derive some satisfaction from the evidences I collected in this far-away Moorish town that the gladness of the Mahometan festival does, similarly to the purer joy of the Christian, though in a less degree perhaps, incline towards 'peace and good-will to men,' charity and kindness.

As we sat chatting that evening round the tea-table, to us entered Hamed, bearing, with honest pride illumining his brown features, a great tray of richly engraved brass, heaped up with curious but tempting-looking cakes.

Gracefully presenting them to 'the señora,' he intimated that this was his humble offering or Christmas token of good-will towards the family, and that his mother (whom the good fellow maintains out of his modest wages) had made them with her own hands.

The cakes were made of long thin strips of the finest paste, plentifully sweetened with delicious honey, twisted into quaint shapes, and fried in the purest of oil. I need hardly say that the children were delighted, and immediately commenced to court indigestion by a vigorous onslaught on the new and tempting sweets. Nay, why should I blush to confess that I myself have a very sweet tooth in my head, and such a liking for all things saccharine that my friends say jokingly that I must be getting into my second childhood?—an imputation which, as I am only a little on the wrong side of thirty, I can bear with equanimity. However, I firmly decline to inform an inquisitive public how many of those delightful Moorish cakes I ate: truth to tell, I do not remember; but I enjoyed them heartily, nor found my digestion impaired thereby.

We had a little chat with Hamed—whose face was lighted up with the broadest of grins as we praised his mother's pastry and showed our appreciation of it in the most satisfactory manner—on certain matters of the Mahometan religion and the position of women in the future life. Some of the sterner Muslims believe that women have no souls; others opine that while good men go to '*Eljannah*,' or heaven, and bad ones to '*Eljehannam*,' or hell, women and mediocre characters are deported to a vague kind of limbo which they designate as '*Bab Maroksh*,' or the Morocco Gate.

But the gentle, liberal, and gallant Hamed informed us, in reply to an individual query with regard to our Moorish housemaid, that 'if Lanniya plenty good, no *tiefem* (steal), no drinkum *sharab* (wine), and go for *scula* ("school," or religious instruction in the mosque, or in a schoolhouse adjoining it), by and by she go for *Eljannah*.'

I am hardly correct, by the way, in speaking of Lanniya as 'housemaid,' for Moorish maidens and wives never go into the service of European families, being prohibited by their religion from showing their faces; it is only widows and divorced women who may go about unveiled, and mingle with Christians.

The next morning, soon after the last gun of Ramadan had sounded its joyous boom in my ear, I was up and stirring, donning my shooting apparel, and preparing for an early country walk with my faithful four-footed comrade. I had no fear of exciting the fanaticism of the Muslim population by going out shooting on their holy day, for there is not much bigotry in Mogador,—Moors, Christians, and Jews observing

their several religions peacefully side by side, so that three Sundays come in every week, the Mahometan on Friday, the Jewish on Saturday, and then ours.

The sun, just rising from behind the eastern sand-hills, was gilding all the house-tops and minarets, till our white town looked like a rich assemblage of fairy palaces of gold and ivory; the smiling sea, serene and azure, came rippling peacefully up to the base of the rugged brown rocks, enlivened to-day by no statuesque figures of Moorish fishermen; nor did a single boat dot the broad blue expanse of the unusually smooth South Atlantic, of which the fish and the sea-fowl were for once left in undisturbed possession.

As I gazed from the flat roof away over the great town, I heard from many quarters loud sounds of music and merriment. As I passed presently through the narrow streets, with their dead white walls and cool dark arches, scarcely a camel was to be seen at the accustomed corners by the stores of the merchants, where usually whole fleets of the 'ships of the desert' lay moored, unloading almonds, and rich gums, and hides, and all the varied produce of the distant interior.

Outside the town-gates the very hordes of semi-wild scavenger dogs seemed to know that the day was one of peace, for they lay in the sunshine, nor barked and snapped at the infidel intruder as he walked over the golden sands, along the edge of the marshy pool, past the pleasant-looking Moorish cemetery with its graceful verdant palm-trees, a calm oasis in the sandy plain, and out across the shallow lagoon formed by overflows of high tides, through which a few late trains of homeward-bound camels went softly stepping,

looking wonderfully picturesque as they marched through shallow waters so beautifully gilded by the morning sun, their drivers doubtless eager to reach their own home or the shelter of some friendly village to participate in the modest revelries of the joyous season. How I wandered along the shore of the 'many-sounding sea,' enjoying a little rough sport, and the blithe companionship of the big doggie; how I saw never a Moor upon the rocks, but many Jews with long bamboo rods, busily engaged in fishing for bream and bass and rock-fish, it boots not to describe with a minuteness which might be wearisome to my readers, for I am not now writing 'of sport, for sportsmen.'

So let us turn homewards, as the sun is getting high in the heavens, and note the scenes by the way.

Yonder, near the marshy corner of the plain, haunted by wild-fowl, and carrion crows, and mongrel jackal-like dogs, is the rough cemetery of the despised 'Jehoud,' the Israelites who form so large and so wealthy a portion of the population of Mogador. Among the long flat stones that mark the graves of the exiled sons and daughters of Israel there is a winding crowd of white-draped figures, a funeral procession. Unwilling to intrude upon their grief, I pass on, casting an involuntary glance at the picturesque garb and wild gesticulations of the mourners as the women's loud and bitter cry of 'Ai, Ai, Ai, Ai!' sounds weirdly through the air, just as it may have done in the old scriptural times, when 'the mourners went about the streets' and gave unchecked vent to their grief in public, even as they do to this day.

But as I neared the Morocco Gate, from the neighbouring 'Run-

ning-Ground' came very different sounds—a din of many drums, a squeaking of merry fifes, the firing of many long Moorish guns, the shouting of men and boys, and the eerie shrill *taghariet* of the Moorish women.

And as I passed in front of the round battery, out from the great gate of the New Kasbah came the crowd of men, women, and children who had been clamouring joyfully in the Running-Ground, a bright throng of brown faces and white raiment, interspersed with the gay colours worn by the little children, and dotted here and there by the blood-red of the national flag. Suddenly from a cannon just behind me came a cloud of smoke enveloping me and the dog, and a bang which fairly shook us, and then another and another. The firing of the guns from this battery was the spectacle the Moorish populace had come out to see.

It was an uncomfortable sensation to have big guns going off just behind one; they were only loaded with blank cartridge, of course, but we were quite near enough to be knocked down by a stray piece of wadding, and something did once whistle past my ear suggestively.

But it would never do for an 'Ingleez' to run away in the presence of a lot of Moors; so I walked calmly across the sands while the whole battery of guns—twelve, I think—were fired, Cæsar meanwhile prancing about majestically, and loudly giving vent to his indignation at a proceeding which he evidently considered, as he always does the firing of any gun or pistol by any one but me, an express insult to his master, and an infringement of his peculiar privileges.

I went home by way of the Water-Port, where there was no

movement of lighters or fishing-craft, no stir of bare-legged porters and fishermen, no bustle of Jewish and European merchants; nearly all the boats were drawn up on the shore, and those which remained afloat slumbered tenantless on the broad blue bosom of the sea. On rocks, and in the pleasant shade of walls and arches, a few figures, in bright and gauzy *haïks* and gorgeous new alippers, lounged and dozed, perchance tired with the revelries they had gone through since daybreak, and recruiting their energies for fresh rejoicings toward evening. Reaching home about eleven, I rested a while, deposited my birds in the larder, and then proceeded to stroll about the streets and see how the populace comported themselves on this festive occasion. I was sorry to learn that some of the younger and more fanatical of the Moors had been relieving their feelings by abusing the Jews, some of whom had had stones thrown at them, and their heads slightly broken. But this temporary riot was over, and now all was 'peace and good-will,' except that perhaps there may have lurked a little not unnatural ill-feeling in the minds of the broken-headed Israelites, who could not help feeling rather disgusted at the manner in which the Muslim youths had celebrated 'Christmas for Moors.'

As I passed along the narrow lane wherein the soldiers of the Kaid or Governor, in the snowiest of *haïks* and tallest and reddest of *tarbooshes*, squatted against the wall, chatting blithely as they awaited the advent of their master, a grave and venerable-looking Moorish grandpapa, hurrying along with a great armful of cakes in one of the folds of his *haïk*, stumbled against a loose stone and dropped several of the cakes.

I hastily stooped and picked

them up ; the old man muttered a few words of blessing upon me, insisted on my accepting the dainties I had rescued from the dust, utterly refused to receive them back, pressed my hand, and hurried on, leaving me in a state of embarrassment, from which I was opportunely relieved by the arrival of a bright-eyed little Moor of some seven or eight summers, who was perfectly willing to relieve me from all trouble connected with the handful of cakes. Passing into the busy streets of the Moorish quarter, I found the population coming out of the various mosques, where they had been to morning service, and now going in for a systematic course of 'greetings in the market-place,' and purchasing of presents. O, for an artist's pencil and colours to depict the gorgeous costumes of the town Moors, the quaint wild garb of their country cousins ; the gauzy cream-tinted *haïks* from Morocco ; the rich silken *caftans* of purple, or crimson, or yellow, or green, or azure, or pink, sweetly half-veiled by a fold or two of snowy gauze thrown over them ; the bright red fez caps, and voluminous snowy turbans of the patriarchal-looking old men ; the broad silken sashes from Fez, heavy and stiff with rich embroidery of gold ; the great curved daggers in their richly chased silver or brass sheaths, suspended amid the folds of the *haïk* by thick woollen cords of gay colours ; the handsome brown faces, the flashing black eyes, the wonderful white teeth, the sinewy brown bare legs, the brand-new yellow slippers of the merry Moors of Mogador !

And the negroes, or, as old Fuller would quaintly have called them, 'the images of God cut in ebony,' how their honest black features glistened, and how their

bright teeth grinned beneath turban or fez, or gaudy handkerchief of many colours !

The negro servant of one of the European residents, a good-humoured giant of nearly seven feet, whom his master is wont to describe as 'his nigger and a half,' came stalking down amongst the little shops and stalls with a flaunting bandanna round his head, a purple jacket, a most gorgeous sash, a pair of green baggy breeches, a glittering silver-sheathed dagger, and a most imposing *haïk*, thrown in toga-like folds over all.

Negro women, unveiled, white-clad, adorned as to their shiny black arms with rude heavy bracelets of silver or brass, sat at street-corners with baskets of sweet cakes and little loaves for sale. Veiled Moorish women, perchance showing just one bright black eye to tantalise the beholder, glided along like substantial ghosts in the white raiment which enveloped them from their heads down to the little feet shod with red or yellow slippers embroidered with gold thread or bright-coloured silks. Women leading tiny toddlers of children, little bright-eyed boys with crowns shaven all but one queer little tufted ridge in the middle, deftly curled this morning by mamma's loving fingers ; foreheads adorned with quaint frontlets, from which hung curious ornaments of gold and coral and silver, spells against the evil eye, talismans, and what not.

Little boys in beautiful cloth or silken cloaks of pale blue, or delicate purple, or crimson, or rich green, or golden yellow, trotting along as proud as peacocks, holding by the hand some tiny brother who can barely toddle. Children who have just had new slippers purchased for them, and are carrying them home

in triumph; children who, with funny little copper coins in their hand, are congregating round the stall of the swarthy seller of sweetstuffs, who is ejaculating loudly, '*Heloua, Heloua!*' busily brandishing a feathery branch of green *artim* the while, to keep the vagrom flies off his stores of rich dainties composed of walnut and almond toffee, pastes made of almonds and honey and sugar, little brown sugar balls thickly strewn with cummin-seeds, long sticks of peppermint, and other delicacies difficult to describe.

As to the grown-up Moors, never was seen such a handshaking as is going on amongst them. Everybody is shaking hands with everybody else, each wishing the other the Arabic substitute for 'A merry Christmas,' and after each handshaking each of the participants puts his hand to his lips and proceeds, to be stopped two yards farther on for a repetition of the performance.

On we go through the meat-market, and note pityingly the leanness of the Moors' Christmas beef, which has just been butchered, and of which an eager good-humoured crowd are buying small pieces amid much vociferation, chaff, and 'compliments of the season' generally.

Then we come to the green-grocers' shops, where we see huge radishes, great pomegranates, sweet potatoes, and bunches of fragrant mint for the flavouring of the Moors' passionately loved beverage, green tea; then to the grocers' quarter, where, asking a grave and portly Moor for a pennyworth of *fukea* (dried fruit), he puts into half a gourd-shell a pleasant collection of dates, almonds, figs, and raisins, hands them to us with benign politeness. Opposite his store is a low table covered with queer bottles

of all shapes and sizes, filled with a dubious-looking pink fluid, resembling the most delicious hair-oil, but apparently highly appreciated by the Moorish and Jewish youth who crowd around.

In the centre is a burly brandy-bottle, bearing the well-known label of 'J. and F. Martell,' now filled with a fluid presumably more innocuous than the choicest cognac; the big bottle is flanked by rows of little medicine-vials and long thin bottles such as are used for attar of roses and other Eastern scents; for the vendor of this bright-coloured liquor does not possess cups or tumblers, but dispenses it in the little bottles. A bare-headed youth, with shaven crown, tenders a *mozouna*, receives a two-ounce vial, empties it solemnly amid the envious looks of his comrades, sets it down, and walks gravely away.

Away we go too, Cæsar and I, and I note that there is hardly a Jew to be seen in the streets; they are afraid of stone-throwing, and outbursts of the slumbering hatred and contempt with which they are regarded by the orthodox Muslim.

As for Christians, Englishmen especially, they are much more tolerated and respected; and I know that I may walk the town all day without fear of molestation, and get plenty of kindly greetings and many a smile and shake of the hand.

Out of the busy market, up the narrow and shady streets, hearing sounds of the fearsome trumpet, which I have already compared to an exaggerated mosquito, meeting that instrument presently at a corner—a horrid tin thing about two yards long, wielded by a sinewy little man in a blue tunic, accompanying a gaily-dressed boy on a sleek and patient donkey. Firing and drumming and firing of guns going on all around.

Fierce-looking Moors and Arabs from the country leaning on their long silver-mounted guns, scowling at the 'Kaffer,' whom they have perchance not seen until they came to El Souërah. A veiled, but evidently portly, dame, leading by the hand a pretty little girl, in a red skirt below a rich garment of lace or embroidery, with a crimson hooded cloak or *djelab* over it, rich ornaments on her smooth brown forehead, enormous silver anklets, little bare feet, dyed, like her hands and those of most of the little girls and many of the big ones, a bright red with henna. Little girl shrinks behind her mother, afraid of the Giaour or of his big dog; the Giaour slips by with a smile, doggie with a friendly wag of his tail, and we go homeward for a while; Cæsar to make a hearty meal of the biscuits which have come all the way from England for him; his master to partake of lunch, then smoke a pipe on the roof, and look wistfully out over the bright blue sky, and let his thoughts wander far, far away to many a pleasant Christmas in a pleasant corner of the fair Western land:

'Where is now the merry party
I remember long ago,
Laughing round the Christmas fireside,
Brightened by its ruddy glow?'

But the Moor's Christmas has come early in October; there is time yet, and plenty of English steamers going backwards and forwards; who knows whether the wanderer may not yet spend the next Christmas by a genial English fireside, and recount to prattling children on his knee

(others' children, alas!) the curious sights, sounds, and scenes of 'Christmas for Moros'? But I have not quite done with you yet, kindly reader. I must just briefly tell you how I went out again in the afternoon with Cæsar and a two-legged friend, and found more shopping going on and more hand-shaking, and found the more festive spirits getting hilarious over green tea and coffee and *kief*; how we strolled down to the Water-Port and sat on the quay, surrounded by merry young Moors in their 'Sunday best,' how my friend essayed to sketch one or two of them, and they did not like it, but thought some evil spell would be put upon them thereby; how they asked us many questions about England, and particularly wanted to know how many dollars we possessed; how my companion won the hearts of some of the younger members of the party by teaching them how to whistle between their thumbs, and how to make a certain very loud and direfully discordant screech; and how J. and I finished the afternoon by partaking of a delightful bottle of English ale in the courtyard of a cool store, leaning our chairs against massive stone pillars, and smoking the pipe of peace.

But I fear the stern Editor will not grant me any more space, and I must leave at present the recital of all that I saw on the ensuing day, which the gentle Hamed, if he were a *little* more closely acquainted with our institutions, would call 'Boxing-day for Moros.'

C. A. P. ('SARCELLE').

Mogador.

CLUB CAMEOS.

Culture.

LOOKING back at the past from the vantage-point of many years, there are few features in English life which more impress me than the giant strides made within the last generation in the matter of National Education. The knowledge which was considered highly creditable in a young man when our fourth George was king would be considered at the present day as hardly worthy of the position of an intelligent City clerk. In those 'good old times' a man obtained his degree often without examination, or when he had to go through that ordeal his papers for 'greats' were scarcely superior to those now put before the candidate at matriculation. If the army was to be his career, he donned his Majesty's uniform without troubling himself about the Commentaries of Julius Cæsar, the epochs of history, or the course of English literature; his commission had been paid, and nothing more was needed. Had he relatives in the law, he was destined for the bar, ate his dinners, and became entitled to wear his wig and gown, thanks to his stomach, and not to his brains. Was he a younger son with interest, he was appointed to a clerkship in a Government office, without first having to pay his fees to a crammer. But now the days of privilege are numbered, and the reign of education has been ushered in. The creed of the survival of the fittest is the religion under which we live and move and have our being, and it

must be admitted that the born impecunious fool of this our age has a roughish future before him.

Yet it is an ill wind that blows no one any good. If the lot of the noodle is a hard one, that of the clever man was never more brilliant. Patronage has given place to competitive examinations, and the world of official and professional life is no longer an exclusive area, but an open field, where the prizes of the race fall to the swiftest. The scholar has it all his own way. He does not require to come of an ancient line, or to know a Cabinet Minister, or to possess capital; all he needs to command success are brains,—with perhaps a baptismal or medical certificate. He can rise to the highest posts in the service of our Indian Empire without being the nephew of a director or the friend of those in power in Downing-street. He can wear the blue and the scarlet of the Artillery and the Engineers; he can fly his flag as an admiral; he can take his seat on the woolsack; he can wear the lawn sleeves; he can become a member of the Cabinet—there is no limit to his ambition but the throne and the grave, provided he be one of the brilliant pupils of our new schoolmaster. As Demosthenes extolled the advantages of action, action, action, so now the sires of the rising generation din into the ears of their sons the advantages of education, education, education. Can we therefore wonder that the shrine of Minerva should be thronged with

worshippers, and that she should be raised to the position of tutelary goddess of the nation? A great statesman once wrote that we lived under the Venetian system. Under whatever system we lived before the first Reform Bill, there can be little doubt about our now living under the Chinese system.

Nor is this progress in education limited to the higher classes. Culture—we believe that is the correct word—is now the aim and desire of all save the most vagabond. What with endless cram, competitive examinations, mechanistic institutes, popular science, and school-books on all subjects for the million, it will be quite a treat in a few years to meet with a man who knows nothing. A veteran like myself, educated under the old *régime*, is about as much at home in modern conversation as an alderman upon a penitential diet. Everything that I learned in my youth has to be unlearned. Historical characters that I was taught to regard as monsters have now been proved to have possessed every domestic virtue; whilst the men who appeared to me all that was noble and good have, alas, turned out to be villains of the blackest dye. The constant revelations of science—and science is a subject which was never my strong point—bewilder me to exasperation; for no sooner have I made myself familiar with a recent discovery and disabused myself of all my former prejudices, than some great leader of science starts up, and proves most satisfactorily that what I have just acquired is nothing more than a tissue of false conclusions drawn from unsound premises, and utterly worthless in theory and in practice. Then this enlightened person is in his turn contradicted by another great leader in science; and so the ball goes rolling until, what

with dogmatic assertions and vehement refutations, it seems to me that life is too short to make a study of science. It is the same with theology: all my early impressions upon the subject have been shown to be most erroneous; yet what to believe is very puzzling, for no two divines teach alike, and every theory is at variance with its fellow.

Sometimes I think the ignorance and simple faith, which were the fashion in my younger days, preferable to this very advanced state of education, which destroys so much and builds up so little. We are so educated that not only do youths in their teens glibly discuss the most abstruse subjects, but our lower orders have caught the contagion. They in their turn have acquired that little knowledge which Bacon says is so dangerous a thing, and the consequence is that they are gradually becoming discontented with their position in life. The educated tradesman is ashamed of keeping a shop, so he calls his quarters an 'emporium.' The working man, who jumbles up history, geography, and political economy at a night-class, calls himself an 'artisan.' The counter-jumper, who drops his *h's* at a debating club, dubs himself an 'assistant.' The bagman is 'a commercial gentleman,' the young person is a 'young lady,' the clerk is an 'employé,' the hairdresser is an 'artiste,' and for aught I know to the contrary the dustman may call himself an 'artiste in refuse,' and his brother of the watering-cart an 'employé in hydraulics.' A system of education which renders a man happier in his position in life, which makes him a better creature and a more respectable citizen, is a great national boon; but a system of education which makes him

ashamed of his calling and sullen to his superiors, whilst not rendering him qualified for a superior station, is a very doubtful advantage. Hence one of the results of this false shame is to cause a great exodus from the working classes into the middle classes. The prosperous shopkeeper declines to bring up his son for the lower walks of trade. The field is now so open—thanks to the example set us by John Chinaman—and the prizes to be obtained by the highly educated are so worth the winning, that every one wishes to qualify for the race. The son of the yeoman and the son of the tradesman jostle the son of the gentleman at every step—at the public schools, at the universities, and at the great examinations. But though the prizes are many, the competitors are to be counted by their thousands; and as only the few can win, the many who are defeated have no alternative but to add themselves to the already overcrowded middle classes, and intensify the fierce fight for life. With those whom education has placed in the ranks of the victors, existence is no doubt pleasant enough; but with those who have not been so successful, who have tried and have failed, what is their future! How many a tradesman, who sees his son, of whom he had such expectations, plucked for India or the Engineers, getting no practice at the bar, obtaining no patients in medicine, discontented, idle, and fit for nothing, too good for trade, not good enough for anything else, must have regretted the day when he vowed 'he would make a gentleman of the boy' instead of sending him into the shop! And how many a son, suspicious and sensitive, and made perhaps by an unkind world to smart under his social shortcom-

ings (you want money and success to carry off some things), must often have felt, in spite of his 'position as a gentleman,' that it would have been better for him to have been as his father before him, a prosperous tradesman, than a poor and unsuccessful 'gentleman'!

One man whom I know within the walls of the Caravanserai must often have indulged in such reflections. Mr. Thorne can hardly be considered in the light of an eligible member of our community. We are told that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump, and it is surprising how disagreeable one cantankerous man who uses his club can make it to those around him. He is always coming upon the scene and cannot be avoided. If you go up to the library you find him snoring on the very sofa you want, with the very book you have come in search of in his useless grasp. If you dine accidentally at the club your table is sure to be placed next to his. Are you having a quiet chat with a friend in the smoking-room, most assuredly will this wretched being drop in and spoil the conversation. He is always quarrelling with the committee, and asking you to support his complaints; nor is it a pleasant task to refuse the request of the cantankerous. At billiards he disputes the accuracy of the marker; at whist his frowns and reproofs intimidate his partner; if you turn up the king at *écarté* his expressive smile plainly conveys to you the impression that he considers you a swindler.

From this you will perhaps gather that Mr. Thorne is not a popular personage, nor in arriving at that conclusion will you be much mistaken. Indeed, he is not a favourite. There are some men, no matter how illus-

trious their birth or how high their office, who from their charm of manner and attractive geniality are always known to their fellows by some fond *soubriquet* or affectionate diminution of their Christian name; but who, looking into the pale spiteful face of Mr. Thorne, with the sinister set in his cold gray eyes, and the angry lines round the snappish mouth, would ever think of addressing him otherwise than as Mr. Thorne? He has no friends, and the list of his acquaintances is limited. When he speaks to you he draws himself up to his full height, regards you with elevated eyebrows, and a general look of lofty superiority on his sickly countenance, and expects you humbly to listen to him, as if he were conferring a great favour in imparting the opinions his splendid intellect has arrived at to so incompetent a creature as yourself. 'What I hate about that fellow,' said a frank youth to me, 'is that he always treats every one as if he were a damned ass.' The remark is forcible, but it not inaptly hits off the character of this superior person.

Mr. Thorne is one of those men with whom conversation is impossible. He will address you, he will lecture you, he will instruct you, but he will not chat with you; conversation with him is a monologue, in which he is the speaker. If you interrupt him he will look at you as if utterly dumbfounded by your audacity; if you advance an opinion he will promptly contradict it; and if you ask him a question upon a subject of which he knows nothing he will reply in his nastiest tones that 'he is not a schoolboy.' When he is present he is Sir Oracle, and permits no one to interfere with his monopoly of eloquence and information. He

passes his judgment upon the works of the greatest writers, patronising them if he approves of their views, or running them down to the lowest depths of disparagement if he differs from them. The range of his criticism is wide, embracing every subject, from music to archæology, and from astronomy to comparative philology. Quack is a favourite word of his. If a man has attained to fame by some brilliant discovery, or by the publication of some erudite work, or by the achievement of some great deed, Mr. Thorne, who hates success as only the failed can hate it, brands him as a quack. Essentially a critic, and the turn of his mind purely receptive, our lofty genius piques himself upon his creative faculties, and is indifferent to everything that is not what he considers original. It must, however, be admitted that there are few things which Mr. Thorne considers original outside his own literary efforts; for no sooner is some discovery said to be new, or some author becomes famous for the novelty of his opinions, than this kindly person proves that the discoverer has only improved upon an old plan, and that the writer is a plagiarist. Listening to this critic it would appear that we have amongst us no scientific men worthy of the name, no profound philosophers, no statesmen who are not adventurers, no historians who are aught than ignorant copyists, no artists, actors, engineers; in short, that there is in this country but one man whose learning and brilliant abilities save her from contempt, and his name is Mr. Ebenezer Thorne. If to detract from the fame of established reputations, if to take the exact opposite of public opinion, if to be guided alone by the jaundiced views of a splenetic

egotism be originality, no one will deny that Mr. Thorne is of all men the most original; and long may the monopoly of such a gift be confined to him!

The existence of such a creature is due entirely to our system of advanced education. Mr. Thorne is one of the painful results of culture—to be pronounced, if you please, ‘culchaw.’ The son of a fairly prosperous boot-maker in Oxford-street, he was sent as a lad to one of the large City schools. Here his aptitude for mathematics and the superior calibre of his abilities generally attracted the attention of the head-master. Young Thorne soon worked his way up to the sixth form, and gained most of the prizes in the school. It had been the intention of the worthy boot-maker to let his son have a good commercial education, and then to take him into the shop as a partner. But the father, like many men whose sons are more brilliantly endowed than themselves, was somewhat in awe of his boy. How could he ask a young man who could spout page after page from the orations of Cicero and Demosthenes, who could read the comedies of Molière without a dictionary, and who was quite at home in conic sections and hydrostatics, to add up a ledger, put on an apron, and take orders? There was no alternative but for the father to ‘make a gentleman of the lad.’ He came to this resolve with a sigh, for he knew the profits of the shop were not to be despised; and, from several of the bad debts he had on his books, he also entertained a shrewd idea of what a ‘gentleman’ was. Yet there was no help for it; he had educated his son above his position, and there was no blame to be attached to the boy if he sneered at his

father’s calling. ‘There is nothing like leather,’ we all know; so let us appreciate at its proper value the sacrifice made by the parent.

Accordingly, young Thorne was sent to Cambridge. That he would pass all the examinations was never for one moment to be doubted. He had been the head of his school, and it was fully expected that he would greatly distinguish himself. Nor would these hopes have been disappointed had the peculiarities of his temperament not made themselves now painfully visible. Mr. Thorne declined to follow the counsels of his tutor; he rejected the books he was told to study; he disputed many of the conclusions that the greatest mathematicians had arrived at. His was one of those lofty minds not to be fettered by tutors and nourished upon school-books. He would rely only upon himself; he would take nothing for granted; he would be his own mathematician, geometrician, and astronomer; and the consequence was that instead of being, as he had modestly expected, Smith’s prizeman and amongst the first three wranglers, he came out in the middle of the Junior Optimes. Of course it was from no fault of his; he had often feared what the result would be; the examiners were jealous of him, and had entered into a conspiracy to defeat him. One of the most painful features in the character of Thorne is that he will never acknowledge himself worsted from any failure of his own. As the Frenchman, when he is beaten, always cries out, ‘*Nous sommes trahis*,’ so Thorne always ascribes his unsuccesses to jealousies, combinations, and conspiracies. Why the world should put itself to such inconvenience as always to spy upon his every action and

misinterpret his every motive none of us have as yet been able to discover. Perhaps, after all, it may be that the world is not so malicious as Mr. Thorne alleges, and that its censures are but the outcome of its honest judgment and opinions.

Quitting Cambridge, Thorne took up his abode in London at the paternal villa of Fulham. So superior a person declined to go through the drudgery of working for professional success. He had no interest at the bar; he despised commerce; and of course, as became a man of his enlightened views, he held that religion was but the result of hereditary prejudices, and the Church but an organised superstition. He resolved to devote himself to science, and to show the world how unjust had been the treatment he had received at the hands of that school of a larger growth—the University. He wrote a work on ‘Gravitation,’ in which his views were so ‘original’ that he inveighed against everybody who had previously illustrated the Newtonian theory, and maintained that his own conclusions were the only sound ones upon the subject. The book was damned by the press, and the publisher’s ledger displayed an alarming sale of forty copies, of which twenty-five had been bought by the proud father of the author. But the confidence of Mr. Thorne was not damped; the world only cared for frivolity, the critics were a parcel of venal and spiteful hacks, and the council of the Astronomical Society had conspired to crush him. He declined to be crushed. He wrote a volume on the ‘Multiple Stars,’ another on ‘Sound,’ a third on ‘Tidal Investigations,’ an essay on ‘Optics,’ and a treatise on ‘Statistical Couples.’ None of these great

works have as yet brought either money or fame to their illustrious author, and this being the case, the old bootmaker roundly declared to his son that he could no longer afford to keep him in idleness, and that he must look out for some employment. A fourth-rate insurance office being in want of an actuary, Mr. Thorne sent in an application, and was glad enough to be appointed to the post. We have to thank one of his directors for electing this great genius a member of the Caravanserai.

We are told by Sydney Smith that the dissenters of Bicester were very fond of declaring that until their arrival there was no such thing in their town as intellectual light—all was wrapped in ignorance, incapacity, and the Established Church. Mr. Thorne is gifted with not a little of the conceit and arrogance of the Bicester dissenter. Until his election to the Caravanserai, he considers that no man of real culture or superior attainments had ever been admitted within the club. Though surrounded by statesmen, distinguished lawyers, well-known members of the House of Commons, men of letters who had taken high honours at the University, *et hoc genus omne*, he calmly regards himself as the intellectual star of the establishment. It is his judgment that should alone be accepted; his opinion that should alone carry weight. He knows what the Government is going to do and what it should do better than the one or two Parliamentary Under-Secretaries who honour the smoking-room with their presence. He lays down the law about art, in spite of the R.A.s and A.R.A.s who are amongst his audience. If the Astronomer Royal were to sit at the next table to him he would condemn many of his conclusions.

He criticises everything and everybody, yet in all his criticisms his object is to show, either by implication or by positive statement, how very much better he could have done the work under discussion. His own brains are the standard by which he measures everything; and, therefore, whenever he says in his most dogmatic manner, '*I cannot understand it,*' or '*I have never heard of it,*' it is to be at once conclusive that the subject which engages our attention is beneath notice. Whenever any classical or French quotation is made in his presence he has a disagreeable trick of asking what you said, and on the request being complied with of dryly saying, '*O!*' and then of repeating the quotation *very* distinctly, as much as to say *that* is the way it should be pronounced. It was of Mr. Thorne that it was once said that had he been present at the Creation he would have given a few hints.

Yet, let us be charitable; for much of this irritating omniscience Mr. Thorne has a certain excuse. He has never found his level. At school, at the University, in his little circle, he has always lived in a set who have looked up to him with blind adoration. At home he is surrounded by those to whom socially and intellectually he is greatly the superior, and he lords it over the parental circle with that despotism which is generally accorded to these dictators of a coterie. Thus he has acquired a habit of not only laying down the law, but of imagining that because education is a novelty to himself and to those in his own sphere, it must be equally a novelty to others. We know how the man to whom champagne is an unwonted luxury talks about that vintage; how the snob swaggers about having met a lord; how

the beggar behaves when set on horseback; and therefore we must not be hard upon Mr. Thorne, considering his shortcomings, that he somewhat over-estimates his erudition. Nor has any one the wish to be hard upon him, if he would act with a little more tact and modesty. Conscious that he is the social inferior of almost every one in the club, he thinks it incumbent upon himself to assume a defensive tone in order to preserve his dignity. But he who is always on the defensive scarcely fails to be offensive. Suspicious to insanity, he snatches at every accidental remark, as if it were intended to convey a personal insult to himself. Should one member innocently say to another, '*It is ill waiting for dead men's shoes,*' or '*There is nothing like leather,*' or '*Shoemaker, stick to your last,*' or '*What boots it?*' or '*That is quite another pair of shoes,*' and the like, Mr. Thorne grows pale and quivers, and imagines that allusions are being made to his origin. Of course at the Caravanserai we all know who the man is, though Mr. Thorne is under the delusion that he preserves the secret of his birth most cleverly; but with the good taste of Englishmen we hardly think of the matter, and would willingly hold out the right hand of fellowship to him were he a more agreeable personage. Yet with that strange inconsistency which is so puzzling a feature in human nature, it is Mr. Thorne who ever begins the aggressive; it is he who is always indulging in personal remarks, who is always branding a member as no gentleman, and who is always informing us what '*society*' should do on certain occasions. It is true that he has more than once drawn upon himself some cruel retort which has silenced him for days, but it has only been after having richly de-

served it. He has made numerous enemies, and his foes know that his vulnerable point is 'the shop.' Thus tortured by his sense of social inferiority, yet exalted by what he considers his intellectual superiority, he goes through life transformed into that curious combination of antitheses which we so often see in men of the Thorne type—combative, yet shrinkingly sensitive; arrogant, yet humble; fearful of oppression, yet ever oppressing; a master one moment, a slave the next.

To me he is a study. Yet when I watch him turning pale at some covert sneer; jealous at the success of men who have distanced him; the holder of a petty appointment, after all the flourish of trumpets that had ushered him into the arena of life; bitter, sensitive, miserable—it seems to me how much happier he would have been had not 'culture' taken him out of his position, and we of the Caravanserai had been, instead of his companions, his customers.

SWITZERLAND, BY PEN AND PENCIL.

CHAPTER XIX. CHUR AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

THE town of Chur, or Coire, ought to be seen on a bright summer day, when the neighbouring mountains have donned their festal array, and are all ablaze with golden light; when the steep sides of the Calanda wear their richest colouring, and the whole valley is decked in brilliant hues of green and gold. At such times as these the scene is exquisitely beautiful, and there is an indefinable something about both town and country which reminds one of the south and Italy. The very lines and forms of the mountains recall the ideal features of the scenery about Rome—the 'classic' scenery, as artists call it, which they esteem so highly.

The old part of Chur seems to have been built without any plan, and contains no regular street: it consists of crooked lanes and alleys, all of which are narrow and confined and very ill-paved; and yet the town has always been prosperous and well-to-do. Perhaps the fault rests with those who laid it out in the first instance. It is built in the form of a triangle, of which the 'Hof,' or Court, is the apex, and the Grabenpromenade the base. The principal thoroughfares are the Obere-gasse and Reichs-gasse, which run into the St. Martinsplatz. Chur was formerly divided into three parts—the village of Chur, which extended from the St. Martinsplatz to the Lukmanier Hotel; the Königshof, or Court; and the Borough, which contained the two Roman towers already mentioned and two churches. Modern Chur

is divided only into the Court and the Town, of which the former is certainly the best worth seeing. The prince-bishop used to reside within the precincts of the Court, where his palace, as well as the beautiful cathedral and Roman Catholic cemetery, are still to be seen. Here also stands the cantonal school, one of the best educational establishments in Switzerland.

The environs of the town are made pleasant by numerous gardens and magnificent fruit-trees; and if the townspeople grow weary of their narrow streets, and dissatisfied with the Malanser, Jeninser, and Herrschäftler wines afforded by such favourite restaurants as the Rothe Löwe and Süsse Winkel, they can go out to the Rosenhügel, at the foot of the Pizokel, and watch the Rhine as it flows past the heights of the Calanda, or look at the rivers Plessur and Landquart, while they drink their bottle of good old Valtellina and enjoy the peaceful sunshine in which Ems, Felsberg, Haldenstein, and the 'Five Villages' lie bathed below. On Sundays almost the whole population is to be found either at the Rosenhügel or the Lürli-bad; while those who are young and active climb up to the chapel of St. Lucius, which is situated on the slopes of the Mittenberg.

If we were to attempt any description of the many longer and shorter excursions which may be made in the immediate neighbourhood of Chur, such as those to Passug, to the Känzli, the ravine

of Scalära, to Trimmis and Schwarzwald, we should find ourselves in the position of the traveller at the good hotel Steinbock, who, after scanning the long bill of fare, and being somewhat puzzled by the mixture of Italian and German dishes, ends by pronouncing them all extremely good. We must, however, just mention the Maiensässe, on the Pizokel, as it is a particularly favourite resort of the people of Chur, and affords them a great deal of enjoyment in that most poetical season of the year, the early spring.

One great charm of the neighbourhood of Chur is the combination of Italian and German characteristics which one there enjoys—atmosphere, light, forms, and colouring all seeming to belong to both countries. There is a primitive, vigorous, healthful look, too, about everything; and this, with the historical reminiscences and old traditions connected with the place, constitutes an additional charm.

But we must not linger longer in the immediate neighbourhood of Chur; for summer is on the wane, and we have still to visit the valley of the Hinter Rhein.

The interesting but ill-famed village of Felsberg, formerly known as Wälschberg, is the first place we pass on the right of the road. It is extraordinary that people cling so obstinately to a place which threatens them with hourly destruction. Masses of dolomite and limestone may at any moment fall down from the Calanda, for the mountain is always crumbling, and is constantly sending heaps of rubbish down into the valley. Not unfrequently the crash of the falling fragments is heard as far as Chur, and the whole place is enveloped in a cloud of dust. The great mound of *débris*, which gradually increased in size until

at last it towered over Alt-Felsberg, became at length so dangerous that, about thirty years ago, the inhabitants were obliged to move a little farther off and build themselves new houses. The situation is certainly not adapted for nervous subjects; but use is everything, as those who reside in the neighbourhood of volcanoes have discovered, and dangers which are chronic very soon come to be despised.

The landscape is constantly changing, but always glorious; and after passing through a succession of woods and meadows we at length reach Thusis, which lies between the Rhine and the Nolla, at the foot of a bare precipitous cliff at the entrance of the Via Mala. Thusis is a rather imposing-looking place, almost worthy to be called a town, and its inhabitants speak German. After the great fire of 1845, previous to which it had already been burnt down four times, it arose from its ashes in renewed beauty. Now that the street is made wider and the houses are less crowded together, there is somewhat less risk of fire; but it is still exposed to great danger from the floods of the Rhine and Nolla, which recur regularly every spring-time. In fact, the chronicles of Thusis, like those of the Rhine valleys in general, are a mere record of disasters; and when we turn to its political history things are not much better. There is one very dark page which tells of the reign of terror in 1618, when the French and Venetian ambassadors took up their abode in Thusis, finding it well adapted for their cruel purpose, and proceeded to take bloody and barbarous vengeance on the Roman Catholics. All the laws and customs of the country were set at defiance; as for moderation, or even common humanity, they

seemed to be qualities utterly unknown to the persecutors, and no lighter sentence than that of torture and death was ever passed upon the unfortunate victims. Whole families, and even whole communes and jurisdictions, were condemned at once. Those were evil times; and what with Spain, France, and Austria, who each and all claimed them by turns, the wretched people no longer knew to whom they owed allegiance. Meanwhile they managed to subsist on such gains as they could make out of the traffic between Italy and Germany, which, indeed, constitutes their chief occupation at the present day, though the road over the Splügen is not so important now as it was before the opening of the railways over the Brenner and through Mont Cenis. In winter a good many wagons pass this way, laden with casks of wine—for Thusis is famous for the well-known Valtellina; and in summer there are as many as ten diligences coming and going daily, besides numerous travelling-carriages, for there is no decrease whatever in the number of travellers annually attracted hither by the awful beauty of the Via Mala.

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The Splügen pass was formerly called Urseler, or Colmo d'Orso, which seems to point to its having been at one time haunted by bears. At the highest point stood a watch-tower, *specula*, from which Speluga and the Romansch Splügia have probably been derived.

Passing by Medels and Nufenen we reach Hinter Rhein, the last village in the valley, in about two hours. It is a very small place, inhabited by herdsmen, and lies almost at the foot of the huge glacier which culminates in the Rheinwaldhorn, or Piz Valrhein, eleven thousand feet high, and is flanked by the peaks of the Güfer-

horn, Marschalhorn, Zapporthorn, Hochberghorn, Schwarzhorn, and St. Lorenzhorn. The whole beautiful group, extending from Nufenen to Monte Generoso, are together known as the Vogelberg, or Adula Mountains, called Mons Avium by the Romans, and Piz d'Uccello by the Italians.

The ice-palace from which the Hinter Rhein here issues forth is most majestic and beautiful, and much grander than the cradle of the Vorder Rhein. The stream, which is from the first of considerable size, rises in a vault of ice, near which the Romans built a temple to the nymphs. In later times, when Christianity had penetrated to these regions, a little chapel was erected here in honour of St. Peter, and soon became famous far and wide. Near the chapel there was also a hospice for the accommodation of those who crossed the Bernardino; it was afterwards occupied by hermit-brothers, but was so completely destroyed at the Reformation that nothing was left of it but one little bell, which still hangs in the belfry at Hinter Rhein. Making our way back to the last-named little village, we begin the steep ascent to the pass of St. Bernardino, which was known to the ancient Romans, and has long been a rival of the Splügen, though it can no more equal the latter in importance than the Splügen can equal the St. Gotthard. Still the Bernardino road is grand, even sublime, and takes us through some mountain-scenery of a solemnly magnificent character. In a couple of hours we reach the summit of the pass, where there is a very respectable mountain-inn by the side of the lake. Other tiny lakelets and pools lie scattered about close by, and from them issue the streams which constitute the sources of the Moësa. This river runs through



FALLS OF THE RHINE, ROFFLA GORGE.

the beautiful Val Mesocco, and eventually joins the Ticino. It rushes down from the mountains with much impetuosity, forming numerous cascades as it leaps and dashes over the rocks, and is spanned by several bold bridges. The road winds serpent-like along its margin, and brings us to our next halting-place, the small village and baths of St. Bernardino, where the valley expands a little, and the Moësa is augmented by the waters of the Val Vignone. It is a very quiet world-secluded spot, sheltered from the rude north winds by the ice-clad mountains which tower above it, and lying open to all the genial influences of the soft southern breezes.

The traveller feels at once that he is entering upon another world: he is surrounded by people of a different character from those he has left behind him, he hears Italian spoken on all sides, and everything he sees reminds him that he is in a Roman Catholic country. The influence of St. Carlo Borromeo, the famous and energetic Bishop of Milan, extended even to this remote place, and by him the tide of the Reformation, which had advanced hither from the north, was effectually checked and turned back. Already we feel that we are in Italy, the land of the olive and myrtle, for the sunshine is Italian in its fervour, and both the features of the landscape and its colouring are unmistakably Italian too. At Soazza we see the first chestnut-trees, and just below the beautiful cascade of Buffalora (one of several which enliven the valley) the vine begins to be cultivated, chestnuts become more abundant, and soon our attention

is caught by the light green foliage of the mulberry and fig tree. At every step we take, the flowers, plants, and creepers which clothe the sides of the valley become more southern in their character, and the people whom we see standing at the doors of their houses are decidedly Italian in manner and feature. They are Italian, in fact; and whether it be that they are more easily satisfied than their neighbours in the other valleys of the Grisons, certain it is that they are never so well off and prosperous. They generally leave Nature and the women to look after the fields and gardens as best they may, while they themselves, like the Ticinesi, go abroad and earn their living at small trades and handicrafts. This, at least, is what many of them do, and the number of emigrants every year is considerable.

In many parts of the Grisons, and also on the Splügen road, at certain seasons of the year one meets with numbers of men and women of a very different type from these. They are distinguished for their honesty, industry, and good looks, and are commonly called Veltliners; for they come from the Val Tellina, the beautiful valleys of the Adda and Moira, where the vine grows in luxuriant perfection. During the summer months they migrate to the northern side of the Alps, and hire themselves out as harvest labourers. They combine all the cleverness and vigour of the Graubündners with the natural grace and other characteristics of the Italians; and they possess the additional merit of wearing a particularly charming and tasteful costume.



PEASANTS OF THE VALLEY OF HINTER RHEIN.

CHAPTER XX. THROUGH THE ENGADINE.

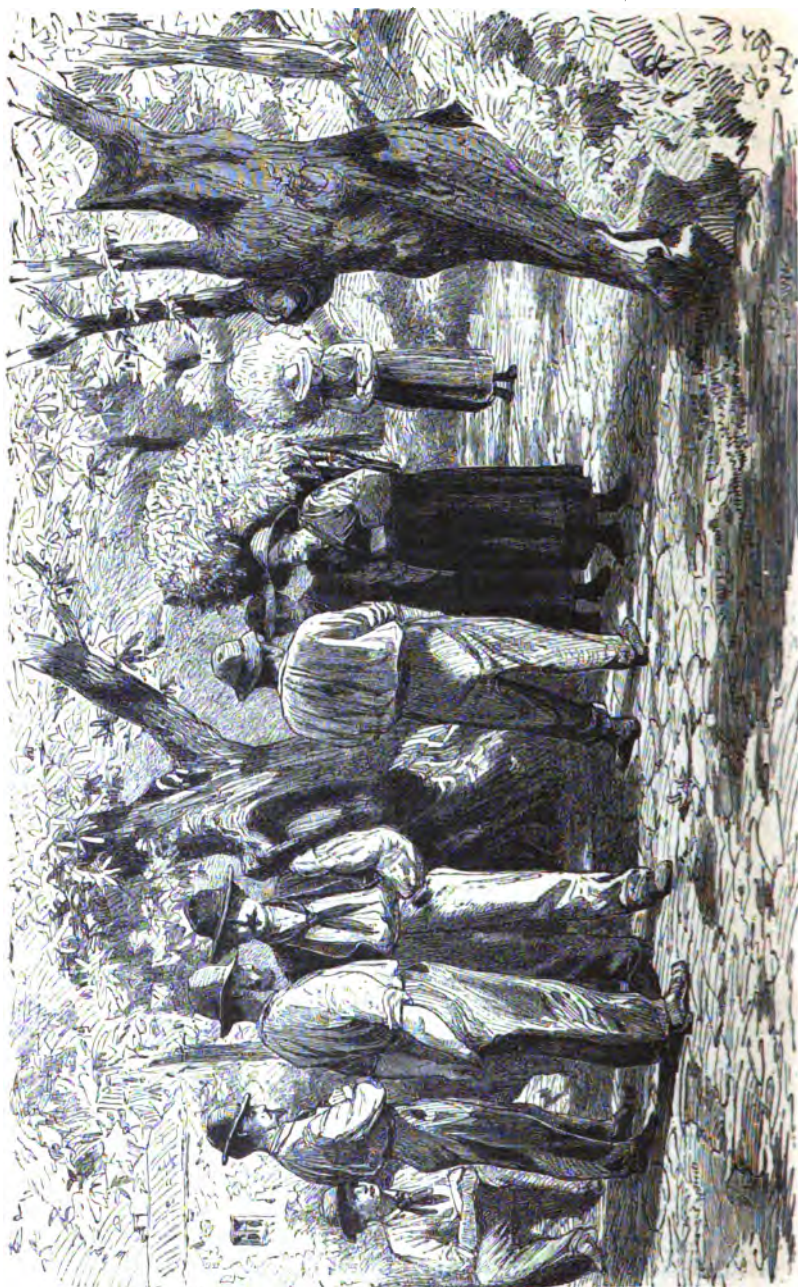
'Turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display,
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread;
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword;
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May.'

GOLDSMITH.

If, on some bright summer day, when the tourist season is just beginning, one could emulate the eagle's flight and hover a while over the Bernina Mountains, taking a bird's-eye view of the country below, we should see that it is a valley, and that it extends from the plateau of the Maloja in the south-west to the pass of Martinsbruck-Finstermünz on the Tyrolese frontier in the north-east; and more than this, we should see foreigners of all nations pouring into the valley on all sides, through all its various inlets, some in travelling-carriages and diligences, some on foot with only a staff in their hand, some accompanied by large trunks and heaps of luggage, and others having with them nothing but a knapsack. This valley is the Engadine, and there are as many as seven fine roads which all lead into it. Travellers from the north who have halted at Chur may choose between the Julier and Albula pass; and, further still, have the option of reaching Tiefenkasten either by way of Churwalden or by Thusis and the magnificent Schyn pass. Arrived at Tiefenkasten, they may take the western road through the valley of Oberhalbstein and over the Julier pass, which will bring them to Silvaplana in the Upper Engadine, or they may take the road to the east, which will lead them over the Albula pass to Ponte.

Those who are not in a hurry, and would like to begin by visiting the green meadows of Prättigau and part of the Lower Engadine, had better go through Landquart and Davos, and across the Flüela pass, unless they too prefer following the new road along the river as far as Tiefenkasten. Tourists from the plains of Lombardy will enter the Engadine either by Chiavenna, the Val Bregaglia and the Maloja pass, or they will pass through Tirano in the valley of the Adda, and then proceed by way of Poschiavo and the Bernina pass, which will bring them to Samaden.

As if these were not enough, there are besides two approaches from the Tyrol, one through the pass near Nauders, which leads into the Lower Engadine, the other leading from Meran to the Münsterthal and Zernetz in the Middle Engadine. In addition to these there are a number of other passes, mere footpaths, and practicable only for the pedestrian. In fact, it is only within the last thirty years or so that there have been any carriage-roads leading into the valley of the Inn; but during this time the energetic Graubündners have done wonders in the way of blasting, digging, levelling, and constructing, and all the post-roads are works of a most masterly character. Those who made them knew perfectly well what they were about, though they thought less of their own convenience than of making the way easy for foreigners, who at once recognised the beauty of the Engadine, and the healing virtue of its springs, and soon became a source of great profit to the valley. Since that time the baths of St. Moritz and Tarasp Schuls have become a sort of Mecca and Medina



PEASANTS OF THE VALLEY OF MOESA.

to invalids, while the rest of the Engadine is a perfect *El Dorado* for mountaineers and lovers of beautiful scenery; in fact, the Engadine has become decidedly fashionable. And why?

The question is speedily answered so far as the invalids are concerned, for the signal cures wrought by the chalybeate waters are matter of world-wide notoriety. It is rather more difficult to say why the number of ordinary tourists should increase year by year as steadily as it does; for the Bernese Oberland is decidedly more beautiful, with its mighty mountains and tremendous abysses, striking precipices, magnificent waterfalls, charming villages, fine buildings, and lovely lake scenery. It possesses, too, much greater variety, and is more romantic and picturesque than the Engadine, which has nothing of all this to recommend it, and is, it must be confessed, just a trifle monotonous. And yet, seeing that even now, when the first novelty is passed, it still continues to attract admiring visitors in ever-increasing numbers, it must possess charms at least as great as those of the beloved Oberland, though they be of a different character. The beauty of the Engadine is, indeed, less obvious and striking, and requires to be studied to be appreciated; for it consists mainly in the unspoilt and primitive nature of the landscape. Just as a man who has lived for years and years in fashionable society, in rigid conformity with all the rules of conventionality and etiquette, feels a sudden emotion of surprise and pleasure when by chance he is brought into contact with some simple unsophisticated specimen of humanity—one of Nature's noblemen—so those who are satiated with gazing on scenery

and landscapes of the ordinary type, magnificent as these may be, will find most refreshing, invigorating, and altogether beneficial effects produced by a tour through the Engadine, though at first they may find the country somewhat strange.

Under the name of the Engadine are included the mountains, the principal valley, and numerous lateral valleys, forming the great plateau, some fifty odd miles in length, which sweeps in a wide curve round the south-east of Switzerland and connects the north of Italy with the Tyrol and South Germany. The great chains of mountains which bound it on the north and south separate it on the one hand from the northern and central portions of the Grisons—the important valleys of the Prättigau, Davos, Bergün, and Oberhalbstein—and on the other from the southern districts of the Val Tellina, Poschiavo, Bormio, Münsterthal, and Vintschgau. The river Inn rises north of the Maloja pass, at the foot of the Septimer, and at a height of nearly six thousand feet above the level of the sea, and flowing through the whole length of the Engadine, falls some two thousand five hundred feet by the time it reaches Martinsbruck. This shows us that the Engadine lies at a greater elevation than any other inhabited valley in Europe, with the exception, perhaps, of the valley of Avers; and certainly there is no other at such an altitude which contains so large and thriving a population, or so many handsome and even wealthy villages. It is divided into two parts of unequal size—the Upper Engadine, which is about twenty-four, and the Lower Engadine, which is some thirty-three miles long; and though the division is primarily a political one, it is also

physical, as the two divisions are of an essentially different character. In the Upper Engadine there is generally a mile and a half, and often three miles, between the two chains of mountains which bound it on either side, and the breadth of the valley makes it possible to cultivate the soil to good purpose, while, at the same time, it affords comfortable space for the villages and hamlets with which it is thickly dotted. The meadows extend up to the foot of the mountains, and are succeeded by a narrow belt of pine-trees, above which are extensive alpine pastures stretching quite up to the precipitous rocky barrier which runs along on either side, with but little variation in height or outline. Over the crest of this wall-like ridge appear snow-crowned heights and extensive glaciers.

It will give us some idea of the elevation of the bottom of the valley, if we consider that St. Moritz and Samaden, which seem to be situated in a deep hollow, are really on a level with the summit of the Rigi, whose wide range of prospect we know so well. The whole of the Upper Engadine is said to have been a lake in ancient times, and there is a popular tradition to the effect that Madulein—in *medio Eno*—was once surrounded by water. There are still four lakes in the upper part of the basin, one of them being the well-known lake of St. Moritz, and they are connected with one another by the river Inn.

The Upper Engadine extends to Punt-auta or Pont-alta, a bridge below Scafs, which spans the deep ravine between Cinoschel and Brail, where in the old troubled times stood a wall stretching across the valley in a diagonal direction, and dividing the Upper

from the Lower Engadine. Beyond this point, and throughout the Lower Engadine, which extends to the Pomartin or Martinsbruck, the mountains approach one another much more closely—so closely, in fact, that the valley often becomes a mere ravine, and the river disappears from sight, while so little space is left available for any human habitations that the people have been obliged to build their villages on terraces high up above the valley. The northern side, being more sunny as well as less precipitous, is, as a natural consequence, more thickly populated than the other. The villages are not, however, nearly so large or so town-like as those of the Upper Engadine. The most important are Zernetz and Tarasp Schuls—Fex and Scharl being mere clusters of cottages. But the Lower Engadine can hardly be said to have been explored as yet, and there is much that is worth seeing in its lateral valleys, which have hitherto escaped the notice of the ordinary tourist. No doubt they will be discovered in time; but, for the present, there is quite enough to occupy us in the upper valley.

As we have already remarked, the Upper Engadine lies so far above the sea-level, that the village of Samaden is very little lower than the summit of the Rigi; but if the traveller find it difficult to realise this, let him cross the Maloja or Bernina pass from Italy, and when he has at last toiled up to the village, after many hours' incessant climbing, let him just take notice of the fact that even now he is almost at the bottom of the valley, though he is still nearly on a level with the vast glaciers which the Bernina sends forth into it. In one description of the Upper Engadine the following passage occurs:

'The descent from the Bernina to the valley is hardly perceptible, and the traveller would not be surprised to find himself in the midst of alpine chalets and pastures; for, in point of fact, a valley such as this would be a mountain of very considerable size if it happened to be anywhere else; and after taking so long to get up to it one is surprised to find it so thickly populated and studded from one end to the other with such large handsome villages. The sides of the valley are clothed with trees, but not to any great height; the vegetation is of an almost exclusively alpine character, and snowy peaks rise on both sides immediately above the green alps, with which they are in close proximity. And yet the people here do not live in alpine chalets; quite the contrary. Their houses are, many of them, so large and well built that they almost deserve to be called palaces. The balconies, with their iron balustrades of artistic design, the wide steps leading up to the front door, and the windows symmetrically arranged in the fresh white fronts of the houses, show at once that the inmates are not likely to be cowherds; and if we still cherish any such illusion it is speedily dispelled by the sight of the numerous carriages which may be seen rolling quickly along the well-paved carefully-kept roads in the valley. Such a sight as this is hardly to be seen anywhere else in Europe; and the traveller who finds himself in the midst of this animated scene, with evidences of refinement and culture all around him, can scarcely believe that he is actually close to and within sight of the boundary-line which marks off the habitable portion of the earth from that where all life ceases. ... And yet so it is!'

Accordingly, we shall not be astonished to find that there are no oranges to be gathered in this elevated region, and that the beautiful foliage of the beech, oak, elm, sycamore, walnut, and chestnut, with which we have been so familiar in other mountain-regions, is here altogether wanting. In fact, the Engadine is unfortunately characterised throughout by an entire absence of deciduous trees, and the otherwise pretty villages which stud the green pastures look very bare and bald in consequence. The only trees are pines and firs, which grow and flourish in the steepest places and in the poorest soil, and seem to find the Engadine peculiarly favourable to their growth. They attain to a greater size here than almost anywhere else; and the red fir is found at a height of six thousand five hundred feet, the larch and *Pinus cembra* seven thousand feet, above the level of the sea. The last mentioned, a tree of very beautiful and vigorous growth, and a great ornament to the higher mountain-regions, is variously known as the Arolla, Arve, alpine, or Russian cedar, and Siberian pine, and is, *par excellence*, the tree of the Engadine, though less so now than formerly. At one time it was to be found in every part of the canton, and there were thick forests of nothing else; but now it has disappeared to a great extent, and is generally found intermingled with other varieties. Between Sils and Pontresina, however, there are still large woods in which it predominates. Vegetation in general is scanty in the Engadine, but such plants as there are will grow here at an elevation higher by some fifteen hundred or two thousand feet than they will almost anywhere else; and the snow-line is more

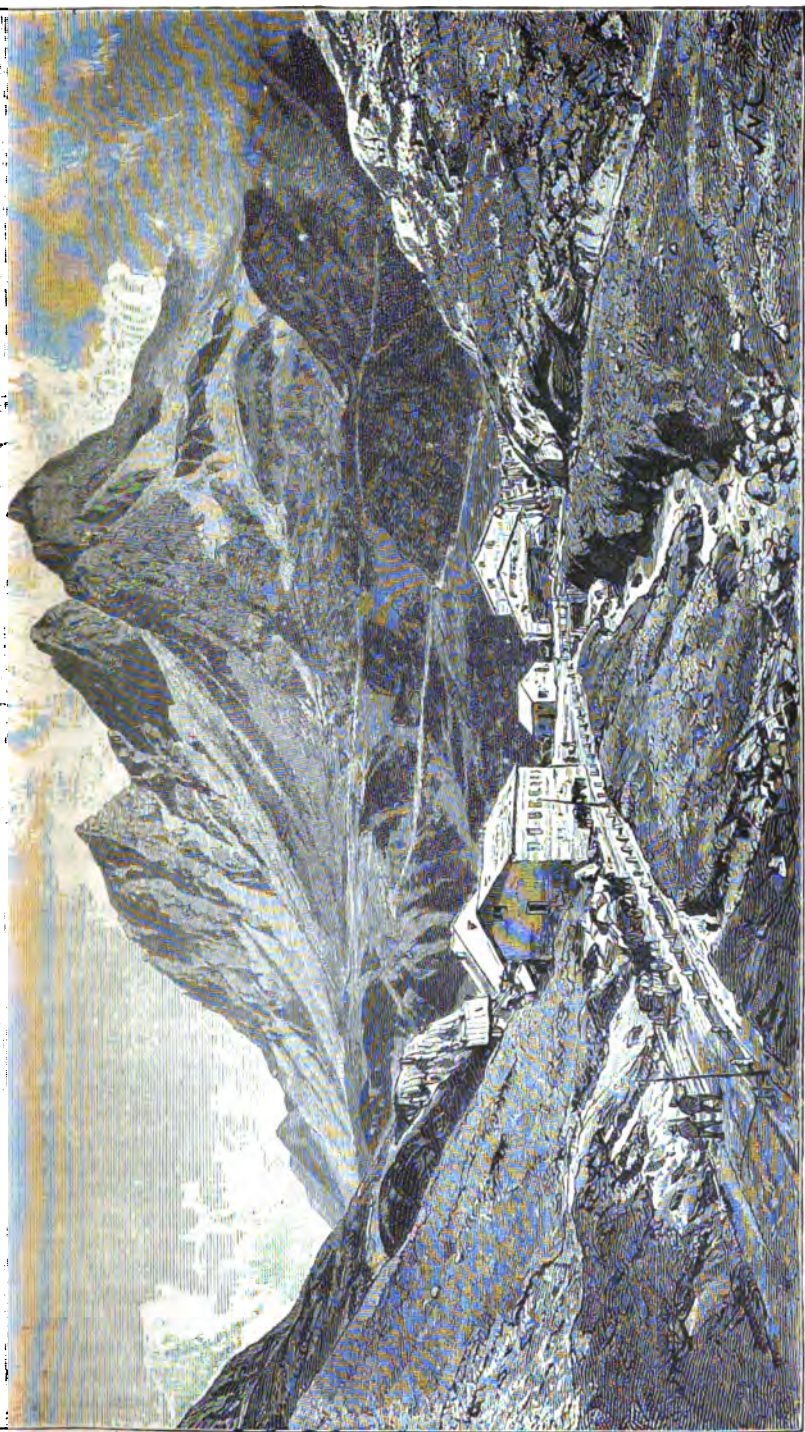
than twelve hundred feet higher than it is in any other part of Switzerland, being about nine thousand five hundred feet above the level of the sea.

The wild animals of the canton are as essentially alpine in their character as is the vegetation. To be sure, the steinbock, or ibex goat, once common throughout the whole of the Engadine, has been utterly exterminated, and the chamois have so diminished in numbers that travellers very seldom succeed in catching sight of a specimen, though Tschudi maintains that there are still many more than a thousand in the higher mountain-districts of the Grisons. However, it is quite certain that their numbers are very different now from what they were when Colani, 'the chamois prince of the Engadine,' could boast of having killed altogether two thousand eight hundred head in the course of his life; and Zinsler, a huntsman of Scharans, killed thirty-one in the valley of Domleschg in the course of two months. On the other hand, the Engadine is so far better off than Bern in that it still possesses at least one genuine representative of the denizens of the old primeval forests, namely the bear, which in the last-mentioned canton is now only to be seen carved in wood. It is by no means rare in the Engadine, though it is allowed to be hunted at all seasons of the year, as are also the wolf, lynx, vulture, eagle, and, unfortunately, even the owl.

The Engadine possesses no native industries, and, as the population is chiefly agricultural and pastoral, we must look elsewhere if we would discover the source of the wealth and prosperity which the valley enjoys. The Engadiner is to be found in all

parts of the world; and, whenever one sees a flourishing coffee-house or confectioner's shop—whether it be in St. Petersburg, Paris, Rome, or Naples—one may be tolerably sure that the proprietor is a native of the Engadine. He is also frequently to be found engaged in trade, and as, whatever his circumstances may be, he is always frugal and thrifty, he almost always makes his fortune. But no sooner has he grown rich than he begins to yearn for home, and sooner or later he is sure to leave the busy bustling city, and go back to the small quiet village where he was born. There he builds himself a villa, which is quite a palace in its way, and spends the rest of his days in his own beloved native land, free from all care and anxiety. Now that we know the Engadiner to be such a cosmopolitan character, it is easy to understand how he comes to be so sociable, so well versed in the ways of the world, so quick at understanding foreigners, so well educated and experienced, and so ready-tongued. Almost all the men hereabouts speak their three or four languages with fluency, and the German is especially noted as being the best to be heard in Switzerland. Protestantism is the prevailing form of religion, and the people have always been very earnest in maintaining it. In times gone by they fought zealously for their faith and also suffered much for it, especially during the miserable Austrian crusades, as one may easily see by a glance at the history of the Engadine and the neighbouring district of the Prättigau.

The whole valley falls naturally into two principal divisions, as we have said; and so again the upper valley is divided into two clearly-marked and distinct portions by



WEISSENSTEIN, ON THE ALBULA PASS.

the diagonal ridge of rock upon which the village of St. Moritz is situated. North-east of this natural boundary are the villages of Bevers; Campovasto, also called Camogask; Ponte, where the road over the Albula pass begins; Madulein, with the ruins of the famous Castle of Guardavall; Zutz, and Scafs. Besides Samaden, which is more frequented by travellers than any other place in the Engadine except St. Moritz, there are also the villages of Cellerina, Campfer, Silvaplana, and the two hamlets called Sils, from which it is but a short journey to the pass of the Maloja, or Maloggia.

The Maloja pass is the most elevated spot in the valley of the Inn, being five thousand nine hundred feet above the level of the sea. It forms the boundary between the Upper Engadine and the valley of Bergell, or Bregaglia, called in Roman times *Prægallia*. This mountain sends forth its waters into the Black Sea, the Adriatic, and we may even say the North Sea, for the Septimer sends forth more than one tributary to join the Rhine. However, this fact will not be brought before our notice in a rapid journey over the pass, the objects most likely to attract our attention being the Piz della Margna and Piz Lunghino, which tower aloft on either side of the elevated plateau and its scanty sprinkling of cottages. More interesting than these two peaks, however, is the glorious view which the pass commands of the exquisitely beautiful valley of Bregaglia, which extends as far as Castasegna, a distance of about eighteen miles, and is bounded on the one hand by the mighty chains of Stalla and Avers, and on the other by those of the Val Tellina. Basking in the light of an almost Italian sun, and clothed

with the luxuriant vegetation of the South, it comes upon the traveller as a strange and sweet surprise after the monotonous pine-woods of the Engadine, to which his eye has of late been accustomed. In this elevated spot he is surrounded by huge blocks of granite, and the only flowers are Alpine roses. Here the road begins to descend with surprising abruptness, and proceeds in a series of steep perilous-looking zigzags to Casaccia; and if any one should chance to find the air of the Engadine too cold, even in the August dog-days, he need only fly across the Maloja, and in a few hours' time he may take his seat under the blooming pomegranates which adorn the garden of Signor Conradi's hotel at Chiavenna. Most tourists who come up hither, however, content themselves with a distant view of this enchanted ground, and then turn back satisfied, to pursue their journey for hours along the margin of the Lake of Sils, where there is hardly room left for the road, past the twin hamlets of Sils, and past Silvaplana to St. Moritz and Samaden.

Silvaplana too stands on a lake, just at the spot where the ancient road over the Julier pass descends into the valley. It is a pleasant place, situated in the midst of quiet green meadows, with a grand view of the mountains, some spurs of which advance close up to the roadway. These mountains are offshoots of the Piz Julier, so named, according to some people, in honour of their great Julius by the Romans, who were acquainted with the pass; while, according to others, it was dedicated to the sun-god Jul, who was worshipped on its summit. The name of Silvaplana, meaning 'a wooded plain,' has ceased to be appropriate now that the wood has entirely

disappeared; but, standing as it does at the junction of the roads from Chiavenna and the Bernina, the place possesses some importance as an emporium for merchandise.

Next to Silvaplana comes the little village of Campfèr, the ancient Campus-ferri, with its brown cottages. And now the road begins to present a more animated appearance, and we are reminded that we are drawing near to St. Moritz by encountering some of the visitors, who frequently walk to the charmingly-situated Acla, or farm of Alpina, whence there is a lovely view of the valley as far as Sils, including Campfèr and Silvaplana, with its lake. What with the little wooded promontory which juts out into the water, the beautiful Alpine cedars, tender-hued larches, verdant meadows, and the bright sunshine, which is so brilliantly reflected by the ice-clad mountains, the whole scene is charming; and the air is so exhilarating, so pure, and so fragrant that even the invalid soon finds himself restored to health.

But yonder lies another lake, green and smiling, and surrounded by woods, above which appears the top of the well-known Piz Languard; and here, on a gentle mountain-slope to our left, stands the pleasant friendly village of St. Moritz, the most elevated in the whole of the Engadine. Old St. Mauritian, called San Murezzaun in Romansch, instead of being frequented chiefly, if not only, by pilgrims, as used to be the case, has of late years made itself a European reputation as a watering-place.

Though raised so far above the level of the sea, quite within the Alpine zone, in fact, we shall find locomotion almost as easy as if we were in a plain; and there is something in the situation of the

place, and in the calm simple grandeur of the surrounding scenery, which seems at once to produce a soothing effect upon the nerves. Certainly the wonderful cures wrought by the air and the water abundantly justify all that has been said and written in their praise. The efficacy of the waters was even recognised by so early an author as Theophrastus Paracelsus, who wrote: 'There is an acid spring at St. Moritz, in the Engadine, which is superior to any other I know of in Europe. It is most strongly impregnated with the acid during the month of August, and those who take it medicinally are speedily restored to health.'

It would be superfluous to say anything about the numerous cures effected here; but certainly Pindar was not far wrong when he declared that 'Water is the best of all things,' at least, so far as the water of St. Moritz is concerned. And yet there is something else here which is even better than the water. Other watering-places strive to make themselves attractive by all sorts of outward adornments; but here Nature has done everything. Certainly the pleasure-grounds are well and tastefully laid out; but the eye wanders away from them and over the woods to the frozen heights of the Piz della Margna, to the savage granite slopes of the Julier pass, then from the Piz Nair to the Piz Padella and Piz Ot, above Samaden, and thence to the bleak rocks of the Piz Languard. Close at hand we have the village, which is increasing in size every year; and at the back of the Kurhaus there is a beautiful wood, in which we may take delightful walks, or there is the lake with its gay pleasure-boats, which looks extremely inviting. Those who wish for longer expeditions may go to the

Piz St. Gian, to Acla Silva, and to Acla Alpina, the farm already mentioned, or they may go farther still to the Piz Rosatsch or Piz Nair.

The Inn, which is a strong vigorous river, flows through the lake, and immediately afterwards forms a very beautiful cascade in the ravine of Chiarnaduras, which was formerly supposed to be inhabited by a dragon. Some man, tradition has not preserved his name precisely, saw the creature, and was seized with severe illness in consequence. But there is no such thing as ill-health known at St. Moritz nowadays, and we bid farewell to it with the heartfelt wish that all sufferers who resort to its healing springs may speedily be restored to health. Shortly after leaving St. Moritz we come to Samaden, the capital of the Upper Engadine. It has some eight hundred inhabitants, and looks almost like a town; certainly its main streets are not what one expects to see in a village. The place is always animated, owing to the constant passage of travellers and merchandise on their way to and from the various important roads which here converge. No other village in the Engadine can boast such grand-looking buildings; many of them, in fact, are small palaces—and this is especially the case with the residence owned by the ancient Planta family.

According to the fashion prevalent throughout the Engadine, however, the windows of these magnificent mansions are generally remarkably small, and are more like loopholes. They are very small even in the sitting-rooms, and in the upper rooms are hardly visible at all; but nine months of usually severe winter weather, which is what the natives of the Engadine are accustomed to, ren-

der these arrangements quite necessary. Nearly all the houses are of stone, and very solidly built; some, as already mentioned, have balconies, outside staircases, and iron balustrades. A large door leads out of the street into the *fenile*, where the hay is kept, which occupies the back part of the house. Under this there is usually a clean tidy cow-house, which, though almost like a cellar, is often used as a sitting-room, as one sees by the tables and benches. The ordinary living-room occupies one corner of the ground-floor, and contains a gigantic stove and an immense press, the two pieces of furniture which are of most importance in the eyes of an Engadiner; and besides these there are benches placed against the walls all round. The wood used for the flooring, wainscoting, &c., in the older houses, is generally that of the Siberian pine or alpine cedar, which is covered with varnish of a peculiar smell to preserve it from noxious insects. Behind the stove is a steep staircase leading up to the sleeping-room. A good many changes have taken place in the domestic architecture of late years, however, and in some of the neighbouring places, such as Pontresina, one sees houses built quite in the modern style, with the larger windows and other improvements with which the Engadiner has become acquainted during his residence in foreign lands.

Samaden lies beneath the limestone rocks of the Piz Padella, which is connected with the granite peak of the Piz Ot by the rocky ridge known as the Trais Fluors, Three Flowers, or Three Sisters. This Piz Ot, i.e. lofty peak, is over ten thousand six hundred and sixty feet high, and quite rivals the famous Piz Lan-



PEASANTS OF THE VAL TELLINA.

guard in the fine view of the valley and the Bernina group to be seen from its summit. Tradition says that when St. Lucius preached from the Mittenberg, near Chur, he could be heard as far as Trons and Disentis; might we borrow for a moment his stentorian voice, we would fain send down a greeting from the summit of the Piz Ot to the pleasant village of Samaden, and its venerable golden-hearted pastor, Herr Menni, who has few equals here or elsewhere.

And now we must turn our steps towards Pontresina. The road runs along the bank of the often very mischievous stream called the Fletzbach, and passes the old mortuary chapel of Celerina, St. Gian, which lies to the right, on the farther side of some green meadows, and looks very picturesque, being perched upon a little rocky eminence and surrounded by larches. In the summer-time these meadows are full of haymakers, men and women, from the Val Tellina. Their light-red petticoats and waistcoats make them very telling objects in the landscape.

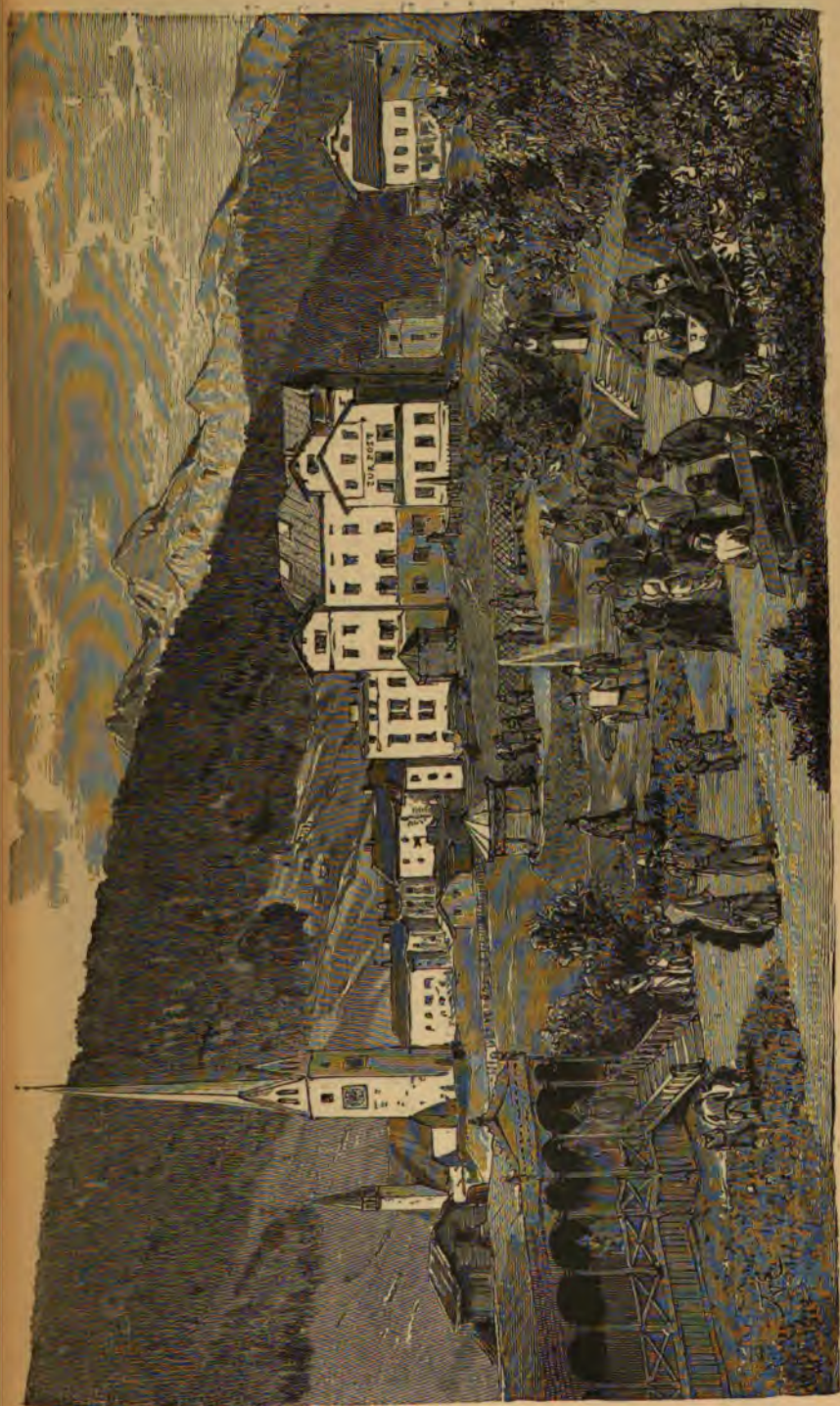
But people of a different type from these are also frequently to be met with on these roads, and about the Roseg and Morteratsch glaciers, namely the Bergamasque shepherds—picturesque interesting-looking figures, with generally handsome faces of an Italian cast, long black curly hair, thick beards, and bright eyes. They wear coarse woollen garments and broad-brimmed sugar-loaf hats. In wet weather, or when there is a cold wind, they wrap themselves up in white cloaks; for, as they ascend to heights which are quite beyond the range of any but themselves, they are, of course, even more exposed to the inclemency of the weather than ordinary herdsmen. These hardy men

come every summer from the Bergamasque valleys of Seriano and Brembano to the High Alps of Switzerland, bringing with them their flocks of large long-legged Bergamasque sheep, to feed on such scanty herbage as they can find among the rocks. It is becoming more and more a recognised fact, however, that their presence is detrimental both to the woods and alpine pastures, and they are not regarded with favour by any but the artist and tourist, in whose eyes they are, of course, extremely interesting objects.

An hour's journey from Samaden brings us to Pontresina; and if the former place be the commercial centre of the Engadine, the latter is certainly the tourist centre—the head-quarters whence excursions may be most conveniently made to the Piz Languard, the Diavolezza, the Piz Corvatsch, Boval, Fuorcla, Surlei, and Fex, to the Chapütschin and Sella pass, and round the Bernina. A walk through the woods from here will also bring us to the Roseg and Morteratsch glaciers, and to the Bernina houses, as well as to various other interesting spots.

Pontresina itself is situated in a lateral valley of the same name, which is not more than six miles long, and is bounded on one side by the Piz Languard and its associates, and on the other by the valleys, glaciers, and less lofty offshoots of the great Bernina group. The valley terminates in the Bernina pass, over which there is a fine road leading through the compactly built town of Puschlav, or Poschiavo, to the Val Tellina and Bormio.

As soon as we reach Laret, the lower village of Pontresina, our attention is at once attracted by the dazzlingly white Roseg glacier,

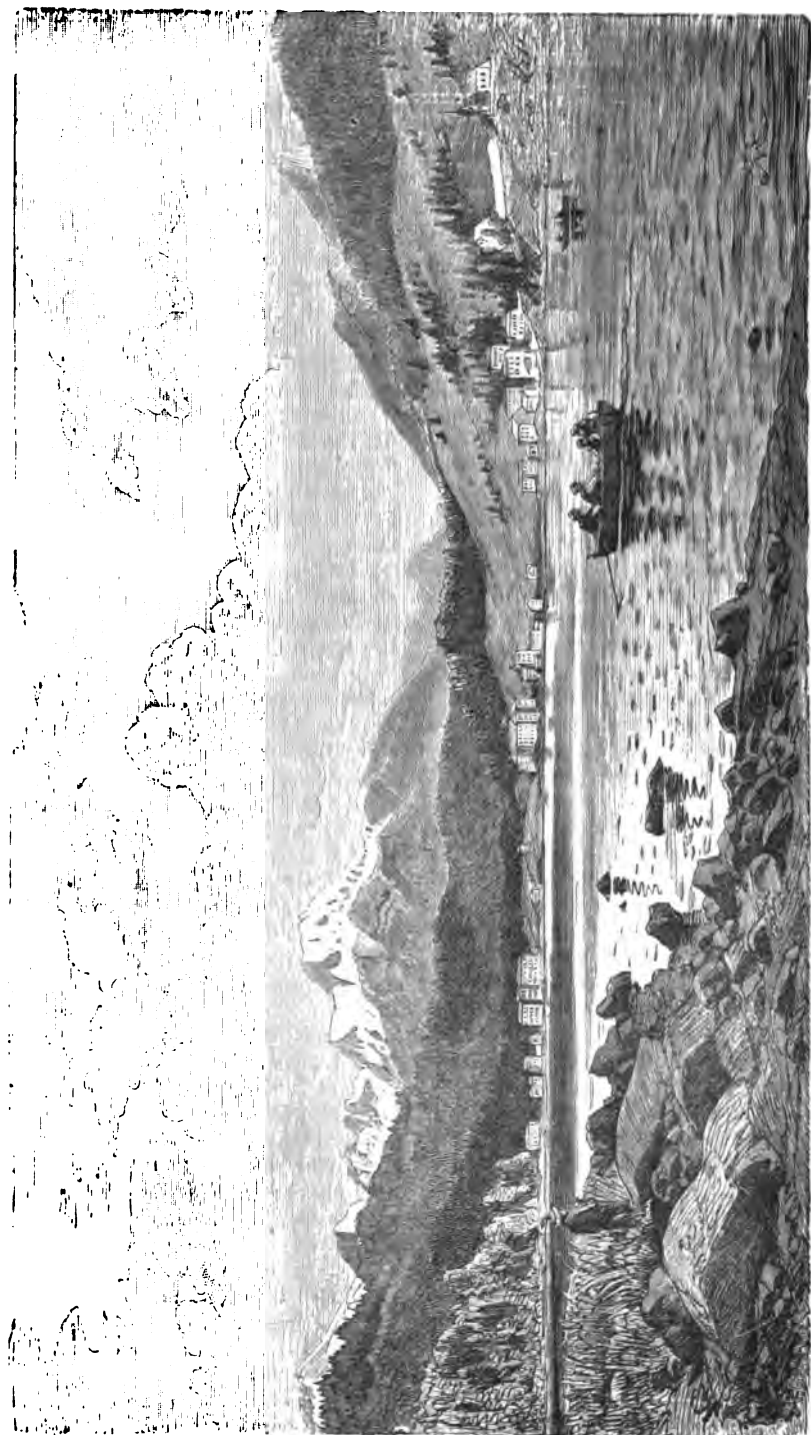


DAVOS AM PLATZ.

with the silvery peaks of the Sella, Glüschaint, Monica, Chapütschin, &c., rising beyond it. These all belong to the great central mass from which the mountains of the Engadine seem to radiate, namely, the mighty chain of the Bernina, which is remarkable both for the boldness of its outlines and the massive proportions of its snow-fields and glaciers. Piz Bernina is the name usually appropriated to the peak which towers aloft between the Bernina pass and the valley of Roseg, and from it proceed the three valleys which are overlooked by Pontresina. The valley of Roseg lies between the Piz Rosatsch and Piz Chalchagn, and terminates in the famous glacier of the same name, which is surmounted by the Piz Bernina, or Monte Rosso da Scerscen, a peak over thirteen thousand feet high, and the loftiest of the group. East of the Roseg valley, and at the foot of Munt Pers, lies a second valley, which is almost filled up by the Morteratsch glacier. Between Munt Pers and the Piz Bernina are the giant peaks of Zupo, Palü, and Cambrena, all of them girt round by glaciers. To the east of this again, and close to the great pyramid of the Piz Languard, lies the third valley, which leads up to the pass of the Bernina. The lower part of these three valleys may be visited by the most inexperienced of tourists; but the upper part should not be attempted save by mountaineers well accustomed to snow and ice. To these latter we are indebted for all that we at present know about the remarkable district surrounding the Bernina, the highest of whose peaks was first ascended by a native of the Engadine in the autumn of 1850.

The way to the lower extremity of the Morteratsch glacier is by a

level road, which leads past the Languard cascade and a picturesque saw-mill, which have formed the subject of many a sketch. On our way through a shady wood of Siberian pines we also pass the much more beautiful falls of the Bernina brook, which dashes with a thundering roar over huge masses of syenite rock, worn quite smooth by the action of the water. Beyond the falls there are the wooden bridges—one over the Bernina brook, the other over the stream which flows from the Morteratsch glacier; then follows a restaurant, and in a few minutes more we reach the blue wall of ice and the ice-grotto of the beautiful glacier, which descends lower than any other similar glacier in the Engadine, and advances far down into the forest. To gain any idea of the size of the glacier, or Vadret da Morteratsch, the traveller must ascend to the summit of the isolated Isola Pers, which rears its head from out the eternal ice, and has little or no vegetation to boast of. From this height there is a wonderful view of the pyramids of blue ice, which seem to rise from an utterly unfathomable depth, and of the conglomeration of fissures, crevasses, rents, and cracks which cover the surface of the glacier, and present a truly formidable appearance. The action of the sun and the presence of various foreign bodies upon the ice combine to produce some most extraordinary effects; and we see great mounds, pillars, peaks, obelisks, needles, hollows, funnels, and what are known as ‘glacier-tables’—large blocks or slabs of stone which have fallen upon the glacier, protecting the part immediately beneath them both from sun and rain, while the surrounding portion has melted away, leaving them supported upon pillars or pedestals of ice.



BATHS AND LAKE OF ST. MORITZ.

Yonder, by way of the rocky Isola Pers, leads the now much-frequented path to the Munt Pers, or summit of the Diavolezza, behind which lies a dreary desolate waste, with the melancholy little lake of the Diavolezza. From here we descend to the hospitable Bernina houses, where we shall find something to console us for our exertions—namely, the splendid red Valtellina wine, which all travellers in the Engadine thoroughly appreciate. It is not so abundant as it used to be in the old days when the traffic in it was at its height, and whole strings of mules with their drivers—or, in the winter, regular caravans of sledges—might be seen crossing the pass. The three houses presented a much more animated and interesting appearance then, and many a picturesque figure halted here for rest and refreshment; but now that there are so many other ways into the Engadine the Bernina pass is rather deserted.

In the summer-time the meadows about here are decked in the brightest green; but their splendour is of short duration, inasmuch as winter reigns here for nearly nine months of the year, and his dominions are said to be steadily increasing in the neighbourhood of the Morteratsch glacier, which has advanced considerably within the last few years. The space it now occupies was once green pasture-land, if one is to put any faith in the story told by the old folks in the Bernina houses.

Once upon a time there were a young shepherd and shepherdess, who were deeply attached to one another; but the damsel's parents refused to listen to the young man's suit, and the latter, whose name was Aratsch, was so overwhelmed with despair that he

determined to go out into the world and make his fortune. The girl promised to be true to him for ever and ever, and she kept her promise for many years; but, as time went on and no news came of her absent lover, the loneliness and anxiety of her position preyed on her mind to such an extent that she gradually wasted away. Meanwhile the youth—who had greatly distinguished himself as a soldier in foreign lands—returned home a full-grown man, loaded with wealth and honours, and then learnt for the first time that his sweetheart was dead. No one recognised him, but he went once more to visit the alpine pasture which had been the scene of his short-lived happiness, and then disappeared again for ever. But the maiden, even after her death, long continued to haunt the place she had loved so well, and the cowherds used to see her going about all her old duties on the alp and in the châlet, looking very beautiful, but sad, and always weeping and sighing. Often, too, they clearly heard the mournful cry, '*Mort Aratsch!*' ('Aratsch is dead!') But the alp prospered wonderfully, and the herdsmen, pitying the maiden's sad fate, treated her wraith with great reverence. One rude man, however, one day refused to allow her to enter the châlet, and from that day the maiden was seen no more; the alp, moreover, ceased to prosper, and the glacier encroached so much upon it that it was soon deserted, and has remained deserted ever since, the ice having now advanced quite down into the valley. The popular opinion is that the adjacent mountain of Munt Pers—or 'Lost Mountain'—owes its name to this circumstance; but some people derive the word *mortâr*, or *murtâr*, from the Keltic *mortari*, 'a thick wood,'

and consider the syllable *atsch* merely as an augmentative.

Either name, however, might be given with more show of reason to the valley and glacier of Roseg, the latter being the most extensive single glacier of the Bernina group. A morning walk up to this glacier from Pontresina is one of the pleasantest expeditions the traveller can make. The valley through which our road lies is enclosed between the Piz Rosatsch and Piz Chalchagn, whose precipitous sides are clothed with woods and meadows. Plants of various kinds grow along the water's edge and among the rocks and stones which strew the ground, and one has literally to wade through beds of alpine roses. Those who have any desire to see what the interior of a real mountain chalet is like will find a better opportunity of satisfying their curiosity here than anywhere else; and though they will probably not see much to admire, they may be supplied with milk of excellent quality. There is a great charm about this valley, with its view of the great glacier in the background; and so popular is it with tourists that the road is generally as much thronged as if it were a fashionable promenade.

But we cannot afford to linger any longer by the way, though we must not expect, during the short remainder of our tour, to see anything more beautiful—or, at all events, more grand—than is to be found in these mountain valleys.

On rattles the diligence, carrying us past the villages of Madulein, Scans, Zernetz, and Sûs, and into the Lower Engadine; which seldom, however, proves very attractive to those who visit it after they have seen and enjoyed the finer scenery of the upper valley. All who ever read news-

paper advertisements are, of course, familiar with the name of Tarasp-Schuls; but the place itself is but a feeble reflection of St. Moritz. Yonder, perched on a precipitous cliff, stands the grand old chateau of Tarasp, formerly owned by the lords of Tarasp, who maintained their authority over the village in spite of the general emancipation effected by the League. The castle was deserted from 1815, and the medicinal springs were quite neglected until the year 1860, when communication was established between the village and the rest of the world. Since then Tarasp, as well as Schuls, Fettau, and Vulpera, have been making rapid progress. Schuls has the same aspect as St. Moritz, but the climate is milder. Its old church, situated upon a lofty eminence, reminds one of the battle between the inhabitants and the Austrians, who attacked them in 1621. Men and women alike took part in the struggle and fought desperately, until the ground was strewn with their dead bodies.

Returning to Sûs, which stands at the mouth of a valley called the Susascathal, from the voluminous torrent by which it is watered, we proceed on our way up to the Flüela pass. The scenery is fine, and close at hand we see the Piz del Res, Murteröl, Piz Badred, with the Grialetsch glacier, and the mouths of the Val Fless and Kehrenthal. The road winds about a great deal, and the diligence rolls slowly along between woods and cliffs, and often on the very verge of the precipice, until at length we reach the summit of the pass, seven thousand eight hundred and eighty-four feet above the level of the sea, where stands the lonely little inn called the Flüela Hospice, surrounded by solemn awful-looking



THE PRAETTIGAUER CLUS.

mountains, and exposed to the most cutting winds. A little farther on we come in sight of the inn Zur Alpenglocke, and farther down still we reach that of the Alpenrose, or Alpine Rose, so named from the rhododendron which grows here in such immense profusion that the rocks are all aglow with it, and we soon forget the desert we have left behind us. The road now becomes more cheerful, and turning off to the left descends into the valley which is watered by the Landwasser. We catch glimpses of meadows, fir-woods, mountain-tops, then of a sparkling lake and a village, and we know that we are in Davos, and that the village yonder is Davos Dörfli, that of Davos am Platz lying a little farther back.

The whole district of Davos is dotted with houses, hamlets, and cottages; but it is only at the two places just mentioned, Im Platz and Dörfli, that there is anything approaching to a village. The valley is about fifteen miles long, and the greater part of it is some five or six thousand feet above the level of the sea. It is enclosed by mountains, of which the most considerable are the Schyhörner, Schwarzhorn, and Hochdukan.

For centuries Davos was neglected and left to undisturbed repose; but of late years a number of hotels have suddenly sprung up, for as soon as it became known that persons suffering from consumption might be greatly benefited, and even cured, by a sojourn here, the fame of the place spread with wonderful rapidity. It is never empty, and even in the winter there are as many as five hundred visitors here waiting for the disappearance of the snow and the return of spring. It is to this circumstance that Davos owes all its interest, for in itself it

possesses but few attractions, and the scenery of the neighbourhood is only moderately beautiful. Its healthfulness, however, makes many people glad to spend as much as six months at a time here.

The scenery about Klosters, the first large place in the Prättigau, is of a more pleasing and cheerful character. Prättigau, 'the valley of meadows,' which lies between the beautiful chains of the Rhätikon and Hochwang, is the most important valley in the Grisons, and appears to enjoy the especial favour of Heaven. The mountains are fine and are terraced with rich meadows, vegetation is most luxuriant, and the people are not only prosperous and good-looking, but they live in picturesque comfortable houses, and their alps are said to be stocked with some of the finest cattle to be seen anywhere. There are more legends and more historical reminiscences connected with this district than with any other part of Switzerland. It is delightfully refreshing to walk along by the side of the foaming Landquart, past the pleasant villages of Sernens, Küblis, Jenatz, Schiers, Grisch, and Seewis, and past groups of houses and numerous chalets and stables.

As we wander along we shall often be tempted to stand still and admire the timber houses, many of which are very fine specimens of ancient woodwork, and are almost more beautiful than those of the renowned Bernese Oberland—to which, however, they bear considerable resemblance. They have, for example, the usual wooden staircase leading up to a projecting gallery, which is generally filled with flowers, the brilliant scarlet lychnis being especially conspicuous, and harmonising well with the dark brown

of the woodwork. The whole house is constructed of wooden logs, skilfully put together and carved with various ornamental devices and inscriptions; the latter being made out in antique or wedge-shaped characters, and consisting of names, dates, and pious sayings. It is a thousand pities that we cannot stay and gossip awhile with some of the people here, for they possess rich stores of legendary lore. Innumerable tales are told of the 'wild men,' who seem to have sprung from this neighbourhood; and there is one particularly beautiful and poetical legend current about the Fairy Madrisa, who fell in love with the son of a cowherd, and is said to have given her name to the Mädrishorn ob Saas.

We are now nearing the farther end of the Prättigau, and the steep cliffs on either side approach closer and closer together, while the road is often blasted in the hard rock. The Landquart rushes furiously along in its narrow stony bed, and the wind roars through the valley behind us to blow us out into the open country. Yonder is the gorge known as the Clus, usually called the 'Schloss' by the people of the Prättigau.

A long dusty road leads in a perfectly straight line from the Clus to the railroad, which will take us down the Valley of the Rhine to the Lake of Constance, where our tour began. But we must make one last halt at Ragatz, that we may see the gorge of the Tamina, of which we have heard so much. Ragatz itself, too, standing as it does in the midst of the broad bright Valley of the Rhine, with glorious woods all around it, is a very refreshing pleasant place. The houses, which are half-buried in rich green foliage and are surrounded by gardens, look cheerful and hospitable, and there is an

air of elegance and refinement about all that meets the eye, such as shows clearly that the tastes and requirements of the many distinguished visitors who annually come to Ragatz have been carefully studied and provided for. The village is overlooked by two mediæval castles, which are rich in historical associations; and that nothing may be wanting to complete the harmony of the landscape, the horizon is bounded by the beautiful forms and outlines of the ever-glorious Alpa. A very little farther on, however, Nature shows herself under a totally different aspect. Gray cliffs rise to right and left of us, with trees clinging desperately to the scanty support afforded them. To the left of the winding road the impetuous Tamina rushes along with a loud roar, and here and there a mountain streamlet comes foaming down the cliff and is lost in a cloud of spray. Alpine roses, saxifrages, and wild creepers of all kinds cover the rocks, and fragments of gray mummulite, which have gradually been worn into strange distorted shapes or marked with wonderful hieroglyphics by the action of the boiling waters, which have been dashing through the gorge from time immemorial. At the far end of the ravine, and looking as if it were jammed in between the cliffs, stands the old bath-house of Pfäfers, and behind it is the celebrated chasm through which the river rushes with frantic fury. The source of the hot springs is in a cavern among the rocks—

'Dim seen through rising mists and cease-
less show'rs,
The hoary cavern wide-surrounding
low'rs.
Still through the gap the struggling
river toils,
And still below the horrid caldron
boils.'

Surely some wonderful drama

must have been enacted here long ago in old primeval times. The Titans themselves are all dead and gone now, however, though they have left their wild scenery behind, and their stage is now occupied by puny sickly mortals, who come hither to wonder and muse over the relics of former ages.

The End.

MODERN CHIVALRY.

'Souvent femme varie.'

Long years ago, in the summer hours,
When hearts were young and lips were true,
We wandered oft mid the sun and flowers,
Purposeless, happy, the long day through.

There I would tell her some legend old,
Of brave true knight and of maiden fair,
Of Lancelot and of Guinevere,
And she would list; and, when all was told,

Looking up with a sweetly innocent air,
And laughingly glad with a child's delight,
Cry, 'You shall be my brave trusty knight,
And I—may I be your maiden fair?'

Then, taking her hand and kissing her cheek,
I would tell her, 'Alas, there's no fighting now;
But ever, in thy dear name, I vow
To strive for the right and protect the weak.

Men now but fight for a sordid gain,
And love soars not but on golden wings;
But dream, dream on—for the dream, though vain,
Is better for thee than the wealth of kings.'

'Tis years ago since that fair day,
And many the change has each one told;
For the dream of a child has passed away,
And a maiden fair has been bought with gold.

SOME PARIS EXHIBITION CURIOSITIES.

WITH the exception of the heavenly bodies, before you inspect any curiosity whatever, you first get at it; which is not always an easy task. Wherever you might lodge in Paris, and without being a professional pedestrian, you were too far away from the Exhibition to reach it easily on foot. Some people thought to escape the difficulty by taking apartments within a stone's throw either of the Trocadéro or the Champ de Mars; but they only put the problem into an inverse form—namely, how to get from the Exhibition to Paris, either for dinner, the play, or other serious object—and at certain hours of the day or night this solution was the less easy feat of the two. How I fared the reader shall know, as a wrinkle against the Exhibition of 1888; for the journeys were themselves curiosities.

On sallying forth, the first morning, from my sleeping-place on the Boulevard Magenta, I naturally looked around for a cab of some sort. None were on the stand, but plenty were passing to and fro. All, however, displayed the label painted in large letters, '*Loué*,' 'Hired' or 'Engaged.' At last, by patiently scanning the horizon, an unlabelled open vehicle was hailed.

'Where to?' asked the potentate seated on his vehicular throne, and crowned with a shiny hat that looked as if it had been up all night.

'To the Exposition; and I want—'

'That's a long way,' he said, pulling a face as long as the distance.

'And I want to call at a place or two on the way there.'

'Monsieur will be reasonable?'

'Certainly. And you—what do you call reasonable?'

'Three francs, monsieur.'

'Very good. Done, for three francs, and a little *pourboire* besides, if we get there without spilling.'

Evidently it was not the expense which need deter one from riding, so much as the tremendous effort to obtain any conveyance whatever. And, in returning from the Exhibition, the struggle was still more desperate, the most formidable competitors being—ladies! When, after long-sustained vigilance, you had secured, as you thought, an empty cab, a gang of decently-dressed women, always plain and middle-aged, would push you aside, jump into the carriage, and drive off forthwith, without even deigning to laugh at your disappointment. The forms of politeness were no more thought of than they would be on board a ship foundering at sea. What could a man do? What could cabby do, unless turn the intruders out by main force? For I don't suppose that he was gallant enough to prefer four fat females as a fare to two average gentlemen. I was served the same trick so repeatedly, that I renounced further attempts to get away in a cab, and consequently made the discovery that there were omnibuses—not tramways, of which more

anon—round the corner of a side-street, where a seat might be had without fighting with unfair claimants for it.

Next morning, disengaged cabs were scarcer than ever. Nothing but *loués* shot across the field of view. Ha! there opposite, aside, retired, stands a gray horse with a trap behind it. Like Eve in Paradise, it 'would be woo'd, and not unsought be won.'

'Are you free?'

'Yes; but this is a *voiture de remise*, and not a common cab with an ordinary tariff.'

'How much for the Exposition and a stoppage *en route* ?'

'Four francs, monsieur.'

When there's only one salmon in the market, it's useless to haggle about the price per pound. The gray horse sets off with a limp and a halt; but, gradually warming to his work, delivers his goods safely at their destination.

The third day my landlady, divining her customer's perplexities, informs me that, at a bureau close by, I can take the *tramway* for the Exhibition. I do not translate the word, for it is naturalised here, like so many from England—coke, coal-tar, ticket, and others too numerous to mention. If this goes on, the English language will have effected a permanent invasion of France. At the bureau you get numbered bits of card, which simply give you the right to enter or mount the 'buses in the order of succession indicated by your number. Luckily, you don't pay for your place until fairly seated in it. An anxious throng is waiting outside at what we may call the tramway station. An omnibus arrives; but you behold that it has hoisted the fatal warning, '*Complet*,' 'Full.' Better luck next time, you fancy. Another 'bus approaches. 'One place,' shouts the conductor, 'No. 201 !'

while you are No. 359, with a party of three or four belonging to you. In this way, to go by tramway, husbands must part from wives, parents from children, and, worse than all, lovers from sweet-hearts. You might loiter there half the day without finding room.

I soon gave it up, and was peering into the distance in search of some wandering *unloué* cab, when up there drove a roomy vehicle, fitted with benches, a ceiling and curtains like those of a four-post bed, and one willing but hungry-looking horse (some of them sport a pair, and good ones too), called in Paris a *tapisserie*, and used in ordinary times as a furniture-van. A lad, with the young idea seen nowhere so fully developed as in London and Paris, clad in a threadbare fur-trimmed *pelisse* that had once belonged to some Polish count, acted as conductor, and screamed aloud, 'A l'Exposition! Cinq-ante centimes! A l'Exposition !'

To get there for fifty centimes, half a franc, and at once, was an opportunity not to be lost. I mounted to the seat where the driver sat; a third individual took his place between us; and, seeing us so comfortably seated, as many of the crowd as there was room for instantly jumped up, exactly as sheep follow a leader who has made bold to clear a hedge or a ditch. '*Complet*!' shouted the fur-clad *gamin*. We started, pitying the unfortunates who seemed likely to reach the Exhibition, if by tramway, at dusk.

Satisfaction set the tongues of our party a-going. Flying conversation, desultory remarks, winged words fluttered about the *tapisserie*, especially when, mounting up hill, the steed conveyed us at a footpace. My neighbour, air-

ing his notions of general geography, remarked, *apropos* to nothing,

'Italy is a beautiful country.'

'Ah, then you have been in Italy!'

'No, indeed; never. I have only heard so.'

'Naples,' observed a lady at the further end of the *tapissière*, — 'Naples is a paradise inhabited by devils.'

'Is Londres as big as Paris, and has Londres a Trocadéro?'

'As big as Paris! I believe so! Much bigger,' exclaimed our driver, proud of the knowledge acquired on his travels. 'Londres has not a Trocadéro; but it has a Crystal and an Obelix. I saw Londres and Angleterre when I went to Beermanghem and Leeverpol, conducting animals, cattle, *bêtes*.'

'That's why you continue your old employment here as long as the Exposition lasts,' I interposed, italicising the remark with a vulgar wink of the off eyelid. A wink is understood, without translation, by all peoples, nations, and languages; although only when imperceptible can it be permitted in good society.

'O, non, monsieur; I didn't say that.'

'Fifty centimes!' demanded the young urchin, before we got half-way to our journey's end. As payment for nearly an hour's quiet drive, passing through the delicious Parc Monceaux, it was assuredly not dear.

All the way, inside Paris and out, the great captive balloon was visible, hovering over the city at ever-varying altitudes, and certainly an ornamental adjunct to the picture. But the view thence, at its greatest height, can hardly be finer than that from the Trocadéro towers. As to calling the ascent 'going up in a balloon,'

it is only a make-believe, a farce, when you are let up, a personally-conducted flock, together with two score other bold aeronauts, and pulled down again, after three minutes' exaltation, by a rope. To parody an old definition, it is a pulley and a string, with a steam-engine at one end, and a set of you-know-whats at the other. Carlyle might truly call it a windbag and a sham. There is no freedom, no adventure, none of the genuine excitement of a real balloon ascent about it. You are little better than a cockchafer attempting to fly with a thread tied to its leg. And it costs twenty francs! Its commonplace-ness was proved by the young lady and her wooden-legged companion, who went up every day, sometimes twice a day. Such assiduity attracting notice, it was discovered that their object aloft was the height of pocket-picking. Most curious of all are the individuals who pay a franc a head for admission to the enclosure to see others go up. Verily, they are content with small satisfaction. They remind one of the babes to whom their economical father promised, 'If you are good children all the week, I will take you to Tortoni's on Sunday to see people eat ices.' And yet the speculation must have been profitable. On one date in October, selected at random, there were twenty ascents with 602 passengers and 3360 lookers-on, which gives a total of 15,400 francs, or 616*l.*; a very pretty little day's receipt, with only a small steam-engine to feed, a trifling leakage of gas to make good, and an inconsiderable number of hands to pay. A few blank days of wind and rain must of course be deducted; but they were not frequent, and could be well afforded. There was also a small band of music to pay. But by this

time the balloon is going, or gone, it is said, captive to London under a permanent engagement to Mr. Walter Gooch of the Princess's Theatre. What for? A little boy told me that, when his company of actors brings the house down, the balloon is to pull it up again. O, you naughty boy!

Immediately after passing through the Trocadéro entrance to the Exhibition, a pleasanter, cheaper, and less undignified ascent can be made, by the lift, to the summit of either of the towers or minarets, each two hundred and sixty-nine feet high, whose form resembles that of an Italian campanile. I write 'can be made' hypothetically; for as the building is to remain, one at least of the lifts may permanently be left there. I tried the eastern tower, which seemed the more popular. There being no suspension employed in the machinery, you have no fear of danger from the breaking of a chain or the giving way of a pulley. You are pushed aloft by an iron shaft or stem, and the motion is particularly smooth and agreeable. Everybody was smiling with pleased surprise. The charge, one franc, was not high enough to put them out of temper. One point is common to balloon ascents; you do not feel to be going upwards, but all surrounding objects seem to descend. On returning to earth, while *you* are going down, everything else appears to be coming up to meet you. The view from the top gallery, extensive and varied, partly metropolis and partly country, with the Seine meandering across the whole panorama, is well worth the price. On the very summit of all is a *buvette*, where thirsty or timid souls can take a glass to support them.

The fine arts claim our early

attention. In about the centre of the Champs de Mars and the middle of a broad cross-avenue is a lofty portal apparently closed by a red screen, to keep out the superabundant glare of daylight. On each side of the portal, the outside wall is decorated with a gigantic porcelain picture, put together in squares, like ordinary Dutch tiles. Each tile having its place in the composition, the pictures can be taken to pieces, packed, removed, and put together again, exactly like a dissected map. The subjects are architecture, landscape, and sea combined, in old Italian style, with charming details. The pine-tree in the right-hand picture is admirably rendered; while the brightness and clearness of the tints convey the exact impression of a brilliant climate. How many hideous walls and gable-ends, indoors and out, might thus be rendered beautiful, defying injury, except from hard blows, cannon-balls, or earthquakes, and as easily cleaned with a soft sponge and tepid water as a grimy child's face on a Sunday morning! Earthenware mosaic like this richly merits to be widely known and largely purchased.

Entering the portal and passing the screen, we are in a striking picture-room, with more to follow visible—the first, one is glad to perceive, of a series 'to be continued.' Instantly the eye is attracted by likenesses of lovely women in still lovelier dresses. Who are they? Famous beauties, celebrated authoresses, stars of the first magnitude in the artistic heavens, musical or dramatic? The catalogue will surely tell us? No, it does not. They are only portraits of Madame A——, of Mdlla. B——, of Madame C. D——, of Mdlla. —, who all, being nameless, might just as well have stayed at home. At least Madame la

Maréchale de MacMahon, Duchesse de Magenta, by P. A. Cot, is not ashamed of her titles. Brava! Let us applaud her courage. She is a portly dame, robed in black silk, looking as if she might very well be allowed to keep her place if she would only close her ears to clerical charmers. Even men decline to acknowledge their pictorial representatives exhibited here. But what do they come for, then? Were I on the hanging committee, I would flatly refuse every anonymous portrait, male or female. The effigies of M. D——, of M. S. B——, and their fellows should especially make room for other gentlemen who are willing to present their card to the public. In portraits, for the great majority of beholders, the personality is more interesting than the picture. If the latter is meritorious as a work of art, so much the better; but it is the individuality represented which rests on the memory. If we don't know who it is, it is nothing to us. Madame la Comtesse de P—— may keep her haughty looks to overawe, perhaps to be laughed at by, the villagers around her château; the sallow-faced young gentleman, with a cigarette between his fingers, might just as well have his head taken off by the first itinerant photographer as by a clever artist for aught we care, unless he tells us his claim to that distinction.

Passing these nonentities, it is some comfort to gaze at authenticated portraits—M. Dufaure, Minister of Justice, evidently a likeness, and not flattered a bit; Gounod, the composer, a good solid head; Alexandre Dumas fils, thoughtful, with a tinge of melancholy; Emile de Girardin, the veteran journalist; Gustave Doré, the French Luca-fa-presto (shall I say it?), conceited-looking, of

grand facility, but hardly of genius, though his sacred subjects make the nearest approach to it. But how frightful is his monster green vase in the great cross-avenue, covered as it is with sprawling boys and tipsy nymphs! One is happy, too, to make the acquaintance of such persons as Emile Augier, Legouvé, Duruy, Lehmann, Philippe Rousseau, Alphonse Daudet, and other celebrities who are not to be met with every day. M. Isidor, Grand Rabbi of France, shows features which are not Jewish at all. In their neighbourhood is a striking martyrdom of St. Stephen, spoiled by the saint's head reposing in a halo resembling a golden plate affixed to the canvas. The angel flying away with a couple of stones, one in each hand (to serve as relics), rendered luminous by contact with the martyr, is at least a bright idea. Mixed up with these are plenty of still-life pictures—pots and pans, fruits and shellfish—the flowers in which, if they could hear, would have to listen to unpleasant remarks from gardeners.

In the Austrian gallery are portraits, by Angeli, interesting to British subjects. Earl Beaconsfield is lifelike, rejoicing in his peculiarly *belle laideur*; Earl Sydney, Lord Chamberlain, is the beau-ideal of a gentlemanly nobleman; Dean Stanley, whose red ribbon does not become him, can hardly be a likeness, for it looks at you very cross and sour; the Princess Christian (Helena) is a most attractive head. The painter of such portraits deserves and finds a place for himself, painted by himself.

One of the extra luxuries of the Exhibition was the troop of bath-chairs, for invalids and infirmities, drawn by men clad in gray uniform, intended to caricature, and

thereby reform, the prevailing male costume of the day. At times and places those chairs, however needful to tolerate, were as great a nuisance as baby perambulators pushed between your legs on the foot-pavement of a crowded street. Amongst the pictures, the evil was minimised by a *Prière de ne pas passer avec des fauteuils roulants*.

Noteworthy specimens of British talent demand fuller mention than there is room for here, and were alone worth the journey to Paris to see, since many of them belong to private collections, and are thereby hidden from the general public. There is Poynter's 'Israel in Egypt,' the picture which procured his admission to the Royal Academy, recording visibly the treatment which the Jewish captives received from the Pharaohs. They are working, as beasts of burden, at the transport of colossal granite monuments. In the foreground is a touching episode of a man, fallen to the ground through fatigue, being refreshed by a compassionate woman, and at the same time urged with the stick to resume work by one of his Egyptian taskmasters. The sun's glare is vividly expressed by the slightness of the aerial perspective. Close to this remarkable picture, and from the same painter (now Art Director of Great Britain), we find 'The Catapult,' men firing off a red-hot bolt; different in style, but equally powerful.

Those who are unacquainted with Alma Tadema's accurate drawing, exhaustive learning, and wondrous finish, have an opportunity of appreciating them in his 'Agrippa's Audience Hall,' his 'Picture-Gallery,' and others of equal distinction, though perhaps less striking and sympathetic. The double flutes or flageolets in-

troduced into his 'Private Party,' however authentic as antiquities, will always provoke my scepticism until I shall actually hear them played, which is not likely. Even if possible and playable, they must have produced, not music, but pure cacophony.

Millais's astonishing versatility, equally great in landscape and portrait, is amply demonstrated, the first by the Scotch upland scene and the 'Mists of October,' the second by 'Yes or No,' 'Three-handed Whist,' and especially by the haughty old Beefeater. His powerful 'North-West Passage' may be taken either as portraiture or as an ideal subject of domestic life. Herkomer's 'Chelsea Pensioners' (mistaken by a Parisian *gamin* for a Session of the House of Lords) shows how the difficulty of a concourse of red-coats seated on parallel benches may be conquered by the life and emotion depicted in each individual, one of whom (apparently at death's door) has caused the picture to be named 'La Dernière Assemblée.'

Mr. P. H. Calderon, R.A.'s Spanish ancestry is betrayed by the resemblance of his portrait (be it said with all respect) to what we might suppose Don Quixote to have been; while Lord Lawrence's head accords more with some weather-beaten veteran than with the popular notion of 'a lord.' And yet he may say, 'I am a lord indeed, and not'—well, one unworthy of the title. The mere names of artists, such as Frith, Landseer, Leslie, &c., alone suffice to show the attractions of this rich collection. Here and there pictorial bits startle you by their appropriate power; such as the etching, from the United States, of poor ill-starred Abraham Lincoln. Before leaving the pictures, you can put yourself into good humour by a glance at 'Comment

cela Finira? (What will be the end of it?)—the heads only of a warm flirtation between a maid-servant and her fellow-domestic.

Sculptors mostly exercise their art on tragic, religious, sentimental, legendary, or at least on serious subjects; nor are such wanting at the present gathering. But Socrates dying is merely an ugly old man in a fit; and Mozart in his last moments is painful rather than interesting. The group of Jenner trying vaccination on his own son, by G. Monteverde, Rome, fixes attention by the thoughtful earnestness of the operator's face and the boy's sturdy, almost heroic, resolution to bear the pain of the puncture without flinching.* A fisherman rescuing a dead body from the waves, by that accomplished actress, Sarah Bernhardt, proves how thoroughly she regards her profession from a seriously artistic point of view. By far the most attractive to the crowd of visitors are comic statues; and, when not absolutely comic, still illustrative of everyday life. From Carpeaux's chisel there are figures and busts in marble, some crowned with roses, others only with undressed hair, but all laughing under some pretext which your imagination is left to divine.

Cencetti sends from Rome two marble busts which, together, make a temptation scene; an old beau, in high cravat and shirt-collar, ogling a merry grinning girl, who looks undecided whether she shall take her admirer's advances in joke or earnest. Behind them, by the irony of chance or of the Fine Arts Committee, Pius IX. is seated, apparently giving with each hand his duplicate blessing both to the tempted

and the temptress. A well-dressed little girl, in marble (perhaps a portrait), holding a parasol, commands pleased approval without exciting mirth. Not far off, appropriately in an out-door corner, stands a much-admired terra-cotta group of a boy sheltering a girl under his umbrella, the whole forming a dripping fountain. The water, rising through the stalk of the umbrella, trickles down it around and outside the figures. The lad's proudly protective air and the girl's secure satisfaction had obtained for the work, at the date of our visit, one hundred and two orders for reproductions—and probably more since then—by the artist, Andrea Boni, of Milan. But the climax of fun, without vulgarity, is reached by Giovanni Focardi's (of London) realistic group, 'You Dirty Boy!' an old woman resolutely washing, say her grandson (but not the favourite), whose helplessly outstretched, down-hanging arms convey his confessed uncleanness and his non-resistance. The right of reproducing this family incident has been bought—rumour says, for 500*l.*—by Messrs. A. & F. Pears, of London, inventors and sole manufacturers of the genuine transparent soaps, who can employ it as a trade-mark and publish it as a statuette either in terra-cotta or in their more congenial and appropriate material, whether opaque or semi-transparent.

May we include, since it is exhibited outside, in the Avenue Rapp, an eccentric piece of American sculpture, namely, 'The Dreaming Iolanthe' (to what family did she belong?)—a study in butter, contributed by Transatlantic kine, and carried intact from Washington to Paris, by Caroline S. Brooks? If, as we are told, 'men's evil manners live in brass; their

* There is a statue of Edward Jenner at Boulogne-sur-Mer, where he resided for some time.

virtues we write in water,' we might model good men's busts in butter, to judge from the ingratitude often shown to patriots—witness the treatment of Monsieur Thiers—who have rendered incalculable service to their country, while we cast in bronze the scourges of humanity.

A more substantial work of art is shortly to cross the Atlantic, as a present from France to the United States, in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of their independence. In the garden of the Champ de Mars stands a gigantic female head of hammered copper, so big that, by purchasing a photograph, you can mount the staircase inside it, and therefrom peep out on the flowerbeds around you through the apertures or windows in its diadem, whence bright electric rays are destined hereafter to stream over the ocean at night. The completed figure, a statue of Liberty, holding aloft in her right hand a torch which will serve as a lighthouse, is to be a Colossa, not of Rhodes, but of the entrance to New York Harbour, on an islet opposite to Long Island. The Greek Colossus was one of the seven wonders of the world; but the world's wonders now could not be counted by seventy times seven. 'Liberty giving Light to the World,' executed by M. Bartholdi, of which we have a sample here, will be 72 mètres high, including the base, from top to bottom, or 236 English feet in all. Withinside, chambers or compartments, up to the waist, will be filled with sand to give it stability, and prevent oscillation by the pressure of the wind. An iron staircase will of course lead to the very summit. The hand which is to hold the beacon-light has already been sent to Philadelphia. In the breast of the

Rhodes Colossus was a mirror, in which the inhabitants could descry ships at a distance. The New Yorkians will probably be content with the modern device of spy-glasses.

Not a few exhibitors (shopkeepers rather), especially in the Galerie du Travail Manuel, drove an excellent retail trade, besides advertising their specialties. Their enormous sale of small articles must have more than repaid their expenses incurred. From their stalls souvenirs of the Exposition were largely carried away, in the shape of pincushions with a little drawer beneath them; machine-made jewelry, such as earrings stamped out in your presence, or watch-chains twisted before your eyes; medals of the Exhibition struck off ditto; dolls, artificial flowers, cheap trinkets, and all sorts of imaginable what-nots and *articles de Paris*. The glass-enclosed diamond-cutting room of M. Ch. Roulina, in which much of the work is done by women, had a fair amount of custom for single-stone rings, warranted genuine Brazilian gems, and very suitable as choice little presents. Indeed those rings were a great attraction. Still, I think more women tried them on their fingers than could persuade their husbands to pay the price of the jewel. At one end of the gallery, the automaton swimming-dog performed in its tank at intervals. It is duly registered and protected from plagiarism, like other important inventions. But the cost, twenty francs, limited the purchase of a not particularly desirable toy.

While waiting for a friend to recruit his strength at one of the refreshment places, a trap-maker close by was doing a brisk business in contrivances for catching every animal from the size of a fox down

to a mouse. There hung the victims, suspended by the neck in the snares, and stuffed a little larger than life. The fox, in France, is looked upon as pure and unmitigated vermin. Except for the value of its skin and brush, it ranks no higher than the rat. Any one who preserved foxes would be considered fit for a lunatic asylum, or at least for the restraint of a *conseil de famille*. I don't know that he could not be proceeded against as a nuisance to the neighbourhood. The interest in the vulpine race lay, here, in the address with which the exhibitor set his traps, showed how to conceal them, and then sprang them by touching the bait-holder, and catching his prey, represented by a wisp of paper, by the neck. The traps went off (by sale) in rapid succession, and I pocketed a rat-trap as a welcome offering to an agricultural friend.

One of the animals thus threatened with disaster is a pretty little rodent, smaller than a full-grown rat, with a white tip to its tail, very tameable and engaging if kept in a cage; which I mention because I think that, luckily, it is not included amongst British quadrupeds. I fancy its correct name is *loir* (though it is not a dormouse); but in the north of France it is familiarly known as *rabailé* or *rat-bailé*. It devours ripe fruit, the choicest and handsomest suiting it best. Apricots, peaches, plums, and pears are difficult to preserve from its ravages; for it climbs to the very topmost branches of a tree, where the finest fruits often grow. It makes a more interesting pet than the squirrel. Whosoever imports it in that capacity should beware of letting it loose to increase and multiply; for it is a greater garden-pest and fruit-devourer than

all those we now have put together. The best bait for it, our trapper said, is a nice little bit of gingerbread.

Further on, Messrs. Perin, Panhard, & Cie.'s delicate little saw with an endless blade must be seen at work to realise the neatness with which it cuts whatever you please out of blocks of wood. Passing from small things to great, from units to aggregates, the national or industrial trophies, piled-up heaps of raw or manufactured articles, are not the least wonderful objects seen. They show that by profuse accumulation and judicious arrangement, a work of art may be composed with anything. It matters not to the artist-designer whether he has huge copper tubes, logs of timber, bales of cloth, glass bottles, coils of rope, or the most outlandish and unpromising materials to deal with. He will put them together in such a way that the first comer shall stop and stare with admiration.

What does that tall glass jar contain? Silvered sugar-plums? No; pure nickel, melted and bottled as irregular oval drops of varying size.

Great praise is due to the exhibit of Australian ores. It was skilfully arranged. The metallurgist, amongst other things, was gratified by a sight of that very rare ore, Resin-Tin.

An amusing idea was that of Mr. Henry Maitland's 'Travels in the Island of Pleasures,' under which title we saw a huge volume, big enough for a giant's library, containing specimens of 2000 sorts of *bombons* and chocolates in fantastic variety.

The cases of Messrs. Eley, and of Messrs. Kynoch & Co. (Wilton, near Birmingham), in the form of 'ammunition manufactures,' were a singularly striking exhibition of the refinement of mechanical skill

applied to the science of destruction. It was truly, although in a sense De Quincey never intended, 'Murder considered as one of the fine arts.'

Special notice must be taken of the splendid specimens of cartography, in which the various State departments of France excelled. Space will only permit us to refer to three, from the Ministry of Public Works. (1) The large-scale map of roads and communications of all kinds throughout France; (2) the large-scale map of France in departments, with specimens of the iron ore from each pinned on above the region where it is found; (3) the large-scale map which showed the phosphates of lime in a similar manner. All these were magnificent specimens of clear accurate *teaching by the eye*, and well deserve imitation on the part of our own Government departments. If the permanent Colonial Exhibition in London, which is now projected, should be carried out, a series of maps of this kind, showing vividly, not only the mineral, but also the vegetable products of our Colonial Empire, would be a notable addition to the technical education of the future.

It is pleasant to be able to allude in this department to an English work of great merit—the Alpine Club map of Switzerland, executed by Mr. Stanford of Charing Cross.

To the student of mechanism, one of the funniest things in the whole Exhibition, perhaps, was a little machine, beautiful in all its details, in the house set apart for the exhibition of the State manufactures in tobacco.

A bevy of girls and workmen there showed the various processes of cigarette-making, from the opening of the tobacco-leaf, and the feeding of the different ma-

chines, down to the packing and labelling of the article.

When the cigarette-boxes had been thus made ready for market, they were finally fed on to the apron of a machine, which *checked the weight of each automatically*. As each little box dropped it was caught by what really resembled a *steel copy of a human hand*, which passed it on to the weights, and let it go if correct, or stopped it if deficient in weight. Altogether an extremely curious and noteworthy piece of labour-saving mechanism. English manufacturers who are engaged in a 'package' trade should not lose sight of it. The position of the house in which the machine was at work we fear caused it to be missed by many visitors.

Now that it appears we may expect another stroke of national luck by the finding of gold in our Madras Presidency, it may be worth recording among our 'curiosities' the figures accompanying the two great gilt models which represented to the eye the bulk of the gold which has been found in our Colonies.

The Canadian octahedron represented the bulk of 4,173,000 ounces of the precious metal—the amount which had been found up to December 1877. The Queensland (Australia) obelisk of gold showed the solid content of what had been found in that country from 1868 to 1877—an amount equivalent to 10,587,644*l.* sterling.

It must have been gratifying to every Briton to witness the eager intelligent interest manifested by the French of all classes in the right royal exhibit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales. Those presents and collections from India, which filled the place of honour beside the State jewels of

France under the grand transept, were no inapt symbol of the sweep of British power. In their mingled barbarism, refinement, and intrinsic value they linked the past and the present, and formed at once a reflex of Imperial sway and artistic growth.

To his Royal Highness, whose hearty coöperation (involving much downright hard work) at the critical moment did so much for this great show, it was some reward to know that the unique collection, which his liberality and care had placed there, was duly appreciated by a gifted and sympathetic people.

Amongst the things to be studied and preserved in connection with the Exhibition, every student of Eastern antiquities and art should possess himself of the little handbook to the British-Indian section prepared by Dr. Birdwood for the Royal Commission. He will there find condensed much that is interesting and useful concerning the antiquity of the Indian trade and the master handicrafts of India.

And here we cannot forbear echoing the words of praise bestowed by the English press on Sir Philip Cunliffe Owen and his staff. Their unwearied energy and courtesy are familiar to all who had to assist practically at the Champ de Mars during this international gathering.

The beautiful assemblage of instruments of precision might frighten away people who are not philosophers; but one at least saves a deal of head-work. With the calculating machine for sixteen figures you can multiply, in a second or two, 99,999,999 by 99,999,999. Also you can with equal rapidity divide the product by one of the factors, or perform any other arithmetical operation of equal complexity.

Every now and then your eye is caught by the label which tells you that some handsome or useful thing—and some trumpery, too—is offered to, or bought for, the National Lottery. It was impossible to see them without buying tickets, five of this pretty smiling young lady, five more of that civil-spoken person in uniform, and so on, until we accumulate a little stock. That done, we have the right to consider which article we should prefer to win. Modestly giving up thoughts of the grand prize—125,000 francs, 5000*l.*—or of the diamond necklace, we hesitate whether it shall be the aforesaid calculating machine, or a landscape in oils, or a stock of string in balls of different sizes enough to set up a village shop, or a carriage, close or open, or an assortment of Dutch gin and liqueurs in bottle, or a cottage piano, or a ditto playable with a crank, or a pair of lamps, or only a single one, or a jointed doll, or a live palm-tree, or a lady's hat and feather, or a satin-cushioned ebony chair, or a dinner-service of glasses for twelve, or an enamelled water-jug and dish, or a porcelain statuette, or a pair of faience vases, or— But the selection is bewildering. So the wise plan will be to reckon on nothing, except the pleasure of having sent workmen's delegates to study the masterpieces of their respective industries.

'Keep the feet warm, and the head cool,' says your doctor. Few English would suspect that the means of doing so were demonstrated in that yellow varnished building in the garden of the Trocadéro, with 'Forêts' (Forests) inscribed in wooden letters on its elevated frontal. You mount the steps and, entering, are confronted by a wild boar with white tusks ready for action. He is only a

harmless type of indigenous game. To the left the wall is hung with round transverse slices of the trunks of trees, like wooden cheeses, with bits of wood clumsily simulating the shape of a human foot; in short, with a complete series illustrating the manufacture of sabots, or wooden shoes, together with the tools employed; from the woodman's double-heeled sabot (one at the real heel, the other at the toe), for stumping through half-frozen slush and mud, to the lady's Sunday or carriage-driving sabot, carved and blacked outside to imitate the folds of leather, lined with velvet and edged with fur.

Dispersed about the building are treatises (with a request not to take them away), printed at the Imprimerie Nationale for the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce (Administration des Forêts) specially for the Exhibition of 1878. They are much dearer than Government publications for the spread of information ought to be; and the 'Notice sur l'Industrie du Sabotage' gives you very little for your money, being confined to one Department only (Lozère) in the south. More interesting would have been the sight of men actually at work making sabots, cutting each wooden cheese into two halves, each half, when large, into quarters, each of which quarters contains a shoe, exactly as the statue lies hid in the block of marble. When the outside form is fairly rough-hewn, the heart of it is cut out, for the foot to enter, with augurs and other tools, whose names, the 'Notice' fussily says, are not found in the French dictionary. The cost of a set of tools, comprising the sabotier's bench, scarcely exceeds 50 francs, or 2*l*.

The fashion of wearing wooden shoes is very ancient, being im-

posed on the mountain populations almost by necessity, especially in winter, in consequence of their granitic subsoil. Some sabots are shod with iron and nails by the village blacksmith to make them last longer, and, what would scarcely be expected, to render the step firmer and prevent slipping on ice and hardened snow. The male peasantry of Lozère are thus so comfortably and healthily shod as to be unacquainted with woollen stockings. With sabots stuffed with hay or straw and the upper part of the foot protected by gaiters, they fearlessly trudge through the puddle places in which they have to earn their daily bread. It would be useless to advise our marshmen to work in sabots; they would just as soon eat frogs and snails. Prejudice is omnipotent. Diderot tells us that, some hundred years ago, a London physician prescribed a pair of sabots to a child of quality who promised to be rickety, but that not a single sabot could be found in all Great Britain, and they were obliged to send across the Channel to obtain them.

The fir-tree, *Pinus sylvestris*, Auvergne variety, is employed for rough sabots. It supplies an excellent winter *chaussure*, protects the feet from wet by the resinous nature of its tissue, does not slip on ice, is light and soft to the foot, dries rapidly, and is sufficiently lasting, especially when the round of wood is taken near the foot of the tree. A fifty-year-old fir-tree will give ten pairs of sabots; men's from the foot of the tree, women's from the middle of the trunk, children's from the top and the stoutest branches. The chips and the twigs serve for fire-wood. Other woods employed are the birch, the alder, the beech, and the walnut, the last only for luxurious sabots. Its slow growth also

limits its use, as well as its being in request for furniture. In Lozère, the saying runs, the walnut-tree is small during a hundred years, tall and healthy another hundred years, wasting away and hollow for the next hundred years.

Of course the Forêts would be incomplete without a show of other woods, amongst them of the much-talked-of *Eucalyptus globulus*, which is heavy, light-coloured, and takes a natural polish without varnish. This Australian Blue Gum-tree is peculiar-looking, fast-growing, and undoubtedly useful where it can exist for a series of years; but the warnings respecting its unsuitableness to the climate of Great Britain ought to be repeated until they are listened to. Nurserymen are wrong when they offer its seeds or seedlings to be planted as largely as oak or ash—everywhere, indeed, except at the North Pole. When they call it hardy, they tell a big —. English gardeners are boasting the height and girth of sundry specimens. Those trees, however, only prove the mildness of the last two winters; not at all that the species is hardier than was supposed. The *Gardener's Chronicle* sees the prolongation of 'the silly season' in the numerous letters to the daily papers on the subject of *Eucalyptus* trees. One writer in the *Standard* even goes so far as to recommend them to be planted on the Thames Embankment, to neutralise the effects of sewage impurities. But even their supposed power to destroy malaria is at present not proven, although their very rapid growth and proportionate exhalation of water from their leaves must necessarily have a good effect by absorbing stagnant moisture from the soil. Nor is the influence of their balsamic exudations absolutely denied. But first of all, they have to be

kept alive. Those who know anything about *Eucalypti*, know very well that it is only under exceptional circumstances that they will survive our winters at all. A severe winter would infallibly kill the majority of the trees down to the ground, if it did not destroy them outright. On a small scale, in favoured localities, where due protection could be given, the result might be different; but that does not invalidate the general rule.

Where can we find old *Eucalypti* outdoors? The proof of their youth is seen in their leaves, which, when juvenile, are sessile on their branch, fixed in a plane more or less perpendicular to the axis of that branch. In that state they give some amount of shade. This is the condition of most of the subjects seen in pots or tubs, or planted out for summer ornament; and it lasts until the tree has attained a height of ten or twelve feet at least. But when a three-year-old specimen, planted out in spring, has taken good root and survived uninjured a winter like the last, its new terminal shoots assume quite a different type. The leaves, once sessile, become more sharp-pointed, and droop from footstalks an inch and a half long, or longer; and they hang in a vertical plane, perpendicular to the horizon, so as to afford but little shade. The higher the sun mounts the less shade they give. The peculiarity is worth noting, if only to show that adult *Eucalypti*, at a certain stage of growth, fall in with the general type of their Australian brethren; namely, they become shadeless trees. They are the Peter Schlemyls of the grove.

There were plenty of curiosities outside the show. The Exhibition made a man acquainted with strange fellow-travellers. Who

are these just come in to breakfast? They speak a language to which my ear catches no clue. They wrap their teapot in a napkin, to keep it warm; they empty soft-boiled eggs into a tumbler-glass and stir them up into an ill-looking mess. They are accompanied by an interpreter, who lays on the table a packet of tea and bread wrapped in an old newspaper. I glance at the print. The characters are Russian. At the theatres you meet the same unwonted company. It was puzzling to decide which beheld each other with the greater astonishment—the *danseuses*, who, because they represented young men, seemed to think they might dispense with petticoats, or the Norman *fermiers*, who, proud of their provinciality, filled a side-box to the ceiling with their church-steeple caps.

Curious must be the cheap dinners offered by benevolent restaurants for 1 fr. 20 c.—a fraction less than a shilling—and, at La Jeune France, Rue Valois, behind the Palais Royal, for 1 fr. 40 c., and 1 fr. 70 c., in case you choose to indulge in an extra. For the last sum you have potage, three dishes, a half-bottle of wine, dessert, and bread at discretion! Without having the courage to essay their merits, I made sure that those establishments do exist, and that some people are content with them. We preferred the Diner de Paris, Passage Jouffroy; good, but too crowded, hot, and bustling. True, they do give you an ice; which is a capital contrivance for catching a cold in the head. At the close of one meal I had a hungry young lady standing by my side waiting for my vacant chair. Poor little famished thing! I had no choice but to finish off as speedily as possible. Those struggles for life, however, will calm down with

the exodus of the exhibitors and the shutting up of their show. Better, and highly to be recommended, is the Café Corazza, 12 Palais Royal, on the right hand as you enter from the Rue Vivienne, and near the end. With capital cookery, exquisite wines, and sufficient elbow-room, the prices are moderate for what you get in return.

And now adieu to L'Exposition Universelle de 1878. It will be long before we look upon its like again; for besides the marvels of human intelligence, skill, and industry, it was replete with those every-day conveniences which are too often absent from public gatherings, with plenty of free sitting room, resting-places, and other accommodation for the weary and the weak. In fine weather a more extraordinary garden-party could not be beheld; in foul weather there was abundant shelter, occupation, and amusement for everybody. The last Exhibition rose of summer has finally bloomed beside its companions, the trained fruit-trees, now transplanted to bear their crops elsewhere. The tramway horses' feet will still patter audibly in the streets while the wheels roll noiselessly over the rails; but the crowds which besieged them, so often in vain, will be dispersed all over the habitable world, leaving sufficient room for Parisians proper. *Sic transit gloria*. Mighty machines, dainty exhibits, and bright glass cases must give way to packing-boxes, cordage, and straw. But at least they have had their brilliant day—which is something. For the rest, they do but submit to the common destiny,

'And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
Leave not a rack behind! We are such
stuff
As dreams are made of.'

FORSAKEN.

THE sky is cheerless with clouds of gloom ;
The boughs are bare and the leaves are shed ;
The rushes sway to the surging tune
Of a stream whose music is dull and dead ;
And never a gleam of sun o'erhead,
And never a blade of grass left green ;
And crystal jewels all strewn and spread
Where thousand flushes of bloom have been.

The birds are singing no song of joy ;
The ivy covers an empty nest :
Will chill of the winter's breath destroy
The light of summer within my breast ?
For comes the touch of a doubt unblest,
And it breaks the calm of a tender dream,
And the crystal cold of its hand has prest
My hope from a hope that 'might have been.'

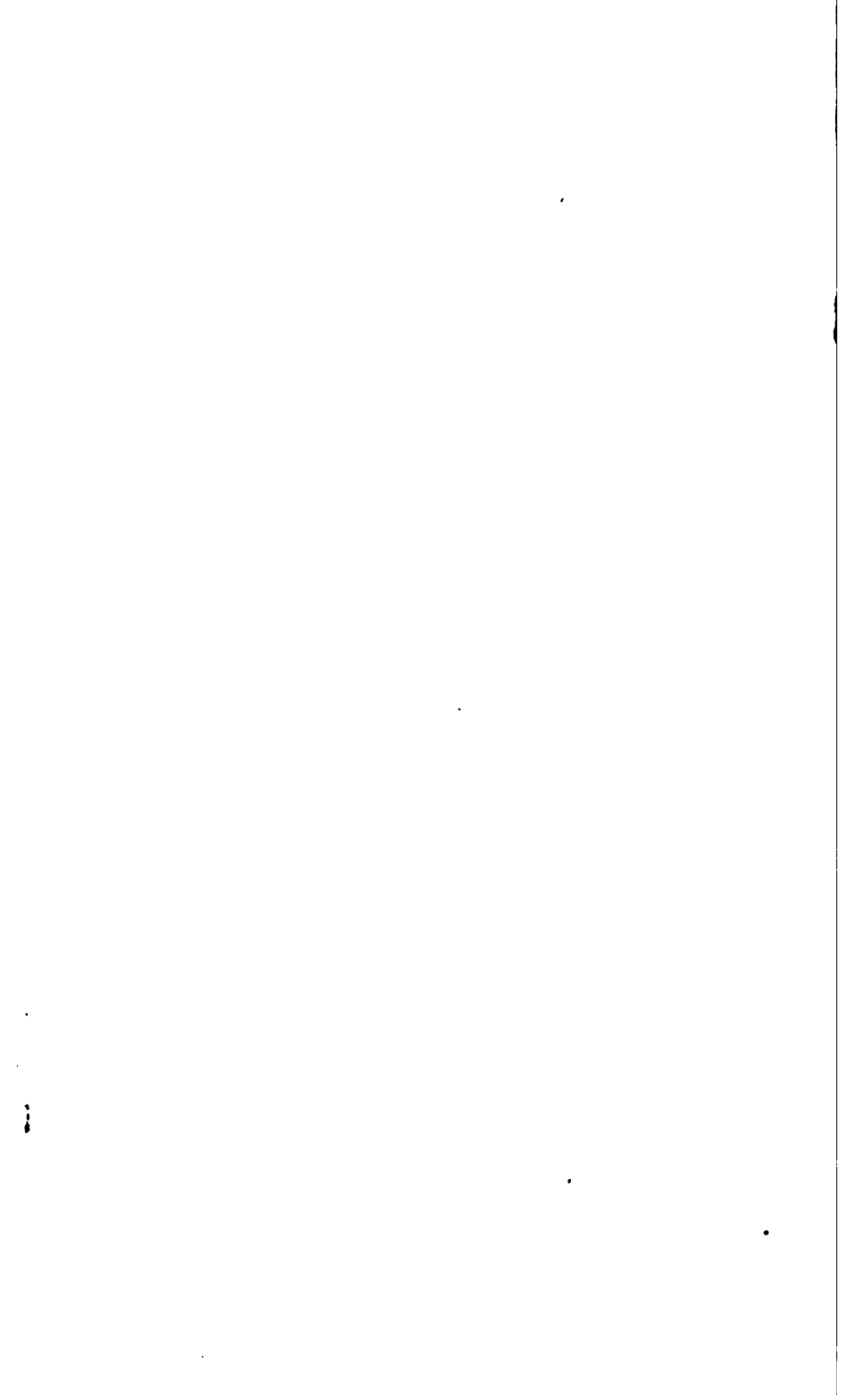
O swaying rushes and shivering birds,
O stream that has never a song to sing,
O fickle swallows who heard his words,
Half whispered here in the silver spring,
My sighs with you to the south may bring
The old, old story of trust betrayed ;
For here I weep, while on wayward wing
You flit and flutter through sun and shade.

I see you fly where my love has flown ;
I see you follow the shimmering track
Of a sunlight spread on a sea sun-strown
With rays that never may lead him back ;
For few and fickle are vows that lack
The truth that lives in the far, far north :
O love, O life, that you might come back,
If only to tell me what love is worth !

Is it worth a summer of bliss divine,
Or a thousand kisses in haze of night,
Or a thousand vows that proclaim you mine,
Or a wrong that never can be set right ?
Is it worth the shedding of tears that blight
Those eyes whose lustre you loved so well ?
Is it worth the loss of a life's delight
To love too little—or love too well ?

O sorrowful eyes all dark and dim,
That look at me from an amber cloud—
A cloud that was burnished gold to him,
Who touched it once with a touch so proud !
O face that has gathered the winter's chill
On lips and brow that to him were vowed !
I would you could follow him where he will,
Or—sink to rest in the summer's shroud !

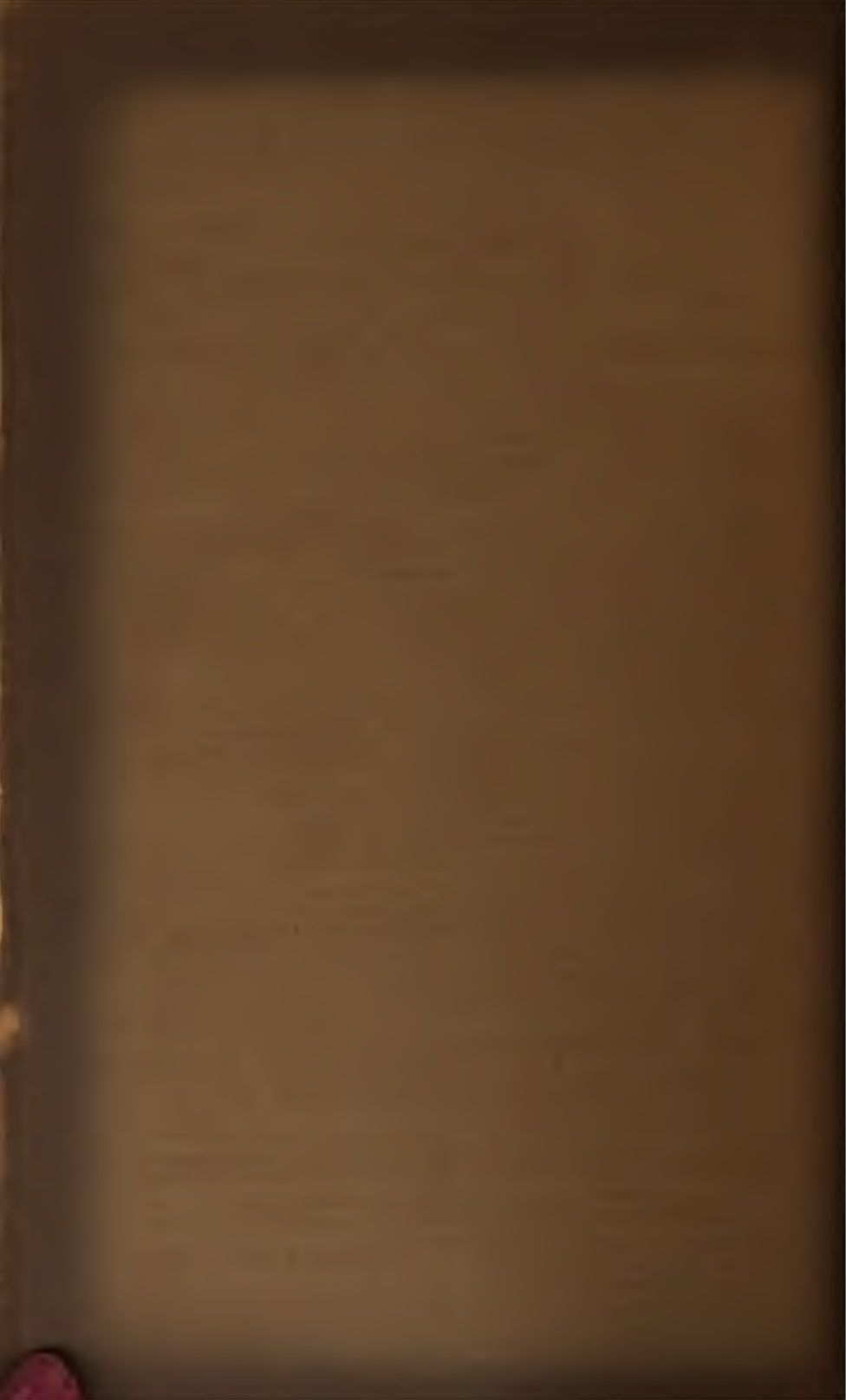






The sky is cheerless with clouds of gloom,
The boughs are bare and the leaves are shed
The rushes away to the surging tune
Of a stream whose music is dull and dead.

SARAH T. LEE



CRESSIDA.

BY BERTHA THOMAS, AUTHOR OF 'PROUD MAISIE.'

CHAPTER XXX.

PARTING.

THE sea was calm again; the squall had passed away, the waves sinking with the wind, but still falling over on the beach with that lapping, angry sound which seems to whisper that the very abating of the storm's fury is but the secret gathering for a fresh burst.

The sky was clear this morning; fishermen were out on the quay, getting their boats and nets ready; children came down to the cove opposite where the brig had struck, to watch the floating spars and bits of wreckage coming ashore, a common sight on that coast. Last night's storm would soon be forgotten, and the damage done here effaced. What was it to the disasters and loss of life on other shores, of which to-day brought the reports? The excitement stirred at Seacombe by the wreck of the vessel and the rescue of the crew was subsiding already, and the place relapsing into its customary state of unbroken, unbreakable repose.

Stillness everywhere, and most of all in the small gray house on the height, sad-looking to-day—hard to say why—and stillest of all in that room with the drawn blinds, and within, two stricken lives.

That she was forbidden to hope, that the injuries, beyond question, were of a mortal kind, and that Joe had not many hours to live, Cressida had heard that morning, heard it calmly too.

But she is paler than he whom she is watching, with such supreme, intense anxiety. Her countenance is the more changed. Joe's has not altered much; nay, it is more composed and natural, and more familiar than his face as she saw it yesterday.

There was no more to be done—they had left her alone with him for a little or a long time; how should she tell? There is no known measure for minutes like those; she seemed to feel her soul ebbing away with them.

'Cressida.'

She had been longing for it till it sounded in her ears, and she could not tell if it was real now. She stood bending over him; the word had rushed to his lips as he half opened his eyes, and looked up at her vacantly and in wonder. There was death in that white face he saw stooping down, and in those sad, speaking eyes. What could be the meaning of it all? He seemed dimly to remember and to realise what had happened to him.

He was thinking of the wreck—the boat—tried to ask some question about the crew. Were all the fellows saved? Yes. That was right. For the rest, the courage and firmness that were as much part of him as the colour of his eyes and his hair, remained unshaken now. Cressida stood motionless, unconsciously holding his hand fast, as if to cling to some link between them, and waiting with shame and distress for the fuller return of memory,

the rousing of thought and its fatal sting, at which the old kind look would change, and vanish away for the last time. Slowly consciousness brought back recollection, and under it his countenance took an expression of unspeakable sadness—but the film of passion was swept away; the turbid currents of his mind ran clear.

'Tell me,' he said fixedly, 'was I wrong—mad, when I thought I could not trust you any more?'

'Joe,' said Cressida, in a whisper, 'I was mad, and it has cost us both our lives. Do you think I can live when you are gone?'

She saw he would believe her now—that truth thus challenged springs out so in eyes and voice that it need not call on Heaven to attest it.

His look softened gradually as he watched her. He did not know how, but felt as if they were or might be at one—still.

'I love you, Joe,' she whispered again; 'and yet, and yet, I was to blame for everything that came to pass—I, more than he. Not that I cared for him—ever—and I was getting to hate him—as I hate him now.'

'You would not have let me go, then,' he said slowly, 'for any other—not in your heart?'

'Not for my life,' she said impetuously; 'but what of that, since I trifled, when it was trifling away your love and our lives that rested on it? But when he sent me word he should come to see me again, I wrote to say I would not have it—the letter you would not let me send, Joe, you remember.'

Joe was trying to collect his scattered faculties; reason, memory, judgment enough to follow what she was saying. He appeared to understand.

'I was angered then at your not trusting me blindly,' she con-

tinued; 'I, who had done my best to destroy your trust and make you think I was unworthy of it.'

'Tell me again,' said Joe. He seemed to catch eagerly at something in her words that his heart desired, something far beyond what the mere sense of them conveyed. 'For I think I've loved you too much, my dear. You did not love me like that, I knew. But it was not he you cared for, not he—at least, you said so.'

His eyes were closed again; consciousness was steady, still, but fainter.

'Joe,' she leaned close over him, 'can you hear me?'

He signed with a smile that he could.

'No man living ever has had, or ever will have had love from me, but you.'

'I thought,' said Joe, whom her words seemed to revive, 'that I had been a rough fellow—perhaps too rough for one like you—and that you wished me gone.'

'You forgot you had been so good to me,' said Cressida passionately; 'better than any one else in the world; and I loved you best, for that, and must have loved you best, on and on, to the end.'

'Kiss me.'

The hours came and went, bringing their full burden of heaviness and doom, not to be averted now. But to the last the expression on his lips remained unaltered, as it were of the last imprint his mind received, a consciousness to which he clung tenaciously, and passed out of the world with it in possession—a deep, conquering, almost exulting peace and satisfaction of soul.

Cressida's composure astonished every one. But only the inexperienced were not alarmed by it and its continuance. No one

mocked her with consolation or demonstration of sympathy. She let Fan lead her away, lay down as she was told, but for days and nights long she did not sleep.

Whatever they told her to do she did, with a sort of unthinking resignation and unconcern. Like a prisoner waiting for assured release, who meanwhile submits to orders with the ready obedience of indifference.

She was to leave Seacombe as soon as possible. Her father had come, and was to take her home to the parsonage at Fernswold. They thought it was the best plan. To Cressida all plans were alike, all places, and all persons.

On the last day, however, she forced herself to rouse her mind a little. She called for Fan, who had remained with her until now, and asked who else had been there. She had heard voices, she said, and knew there was some one she wanted to see before she left.

'Mr. Halliday,' replied Fan. 'I wrote for him to come. Is it he?'

She shook her head. The power of that name, along with much else, had been killed in her by the present unnatural sorrow. If she lived for anything it was to make peace with the minds she had wronged, and of these she did not feel he was one.

'Norbert,' she said. 'Might he come, do you think?'

'Yes, O yes; he is well now.'

'I know,' said Cressida. 'Send him, please.'

One flash of gladness it gave her. When he came in and she saw the clear eye that met hers, the young face as she remembered it long ago—manlier and firmer, but otherwise the same—a smile she had thought nothing could raise came back once more with a kind of gleam.

'How well you look!' she said, her listless eyes resting on him with wistful surprise and pleasure as she stretched out her hand.

It was Norbert who was shocked at her appearance; she was almost unrecognisable; her features ashy pale, a shadow over her eyes, their light extinguished. Was that the beautiful girl who had spirited away half his soul once?

'I thought,' she said, 'I should like to see you once more, just to feel it was true, and that you are well again, as they told me. And to ask you to forgive me,' she added slowly, by and by. 'You won't refuse. He forgave me, and he had more against me even than you.'

Norbert's voice faltered a little, as he said very gently,

'You could not help it.'

'People are kind now,' she said, 'and it is very sweet. You are going to be happy—you, and Fan, and—' she stopped, passed her hand over her eyes, and added dreamily, 'Joe and I are alone now.'

Norbert, as he stood by and watched her compassionately, had grasped in a moment what all others had failed fully to apprehend.

'Should you not live for your friends, Cressida,' he said suddenly, 'if you can? Do they know how ill you are?'

'Yes, I am ill, I know,' she said vaguely. 'I shall be better soon. But when your heart has been struck like that, there is no help sometimes.' A passing look on his face as she spoke penetrated her deeply; she remembered, and said again more earnestly, 'Forgive me, Norbert; I know now what the hurt there is that kills. I have felt it too.'

CHAPTER XXXI.

ALONE.

THREE weeks since the night of the wreck. Upon the November gales an early winter has set in, hard and chill. Frost binds everything, and for days the country has been buried under a light covering of snow.

It lies on the Monks' Orchard woods, on the gables of the closed and shuttered house, the empty farm, over the graves in Fernswold churchyard, and the slate roofs of the little rectory close by, where Cressida is.

Winter has set in in her heart too; frost-bite, for which there is no known cure, and the evil is making its way. No feeling seems left to that heart but in one place, and there something cries out for help that the world cannot render now.

They have all got frightened about her at last; her father, and aunt, and friends. She has grown so weak, who never had strength to spare; but they suppose the young wife's grief must have its way. The doctor says nothing, which frightens them more. Cressida is totally quiet, and seems collected in mind, but does not grow better.

Indeed, to her the life going on around was as strange and apart as to a visitant from a distant country or the next world. If there be really wandering spirits of departed ones about us, how they must laugh at the trivial routine they see us enter upon daily with such zest and industry!

Cressida overheard people talking of herself, of Joe, of his *will*, of the way in which everything had been left to her as absolutely and unconditionally as possible, of how she was now mistress for her life of the Monks' Orchard

estate, and so forth. There would be papers to be signed, forms to be attended to, 'when she was stronger.'

It sounded in her ears simply unmeaning,—a tale told by an idiot,—conveyed no idea, left no mark on her mind whatever.

If once or twice, with a notion of rousing her, they made some distant gentle approach to the subject, wanted her attention for a moment, or her signature, she would put them off, saying, 'To-morrow.' She felt herself as if waiting for something.

One afternoon she asked to be left quite quiet and alone. She must rest, she said. They darkened the room and promised she should not be disturbed.

An hour or so passed by; presently she got up from the sofa, went to the window, and looked out. The scene scarcely came on her as familiar, in its glittering shroud of snow, but how beautiful that shroud was! It disguised the wintry bareness, yet threw out the delicate outlines here and there. The frosted branches and twigs of the tall elms and limes, the feathered shrubs, the soft fleecy meadows and white hedges,—it was a fairy sight; stilling with its intensity of peace, deadening too.

Cressida pressed her face against the glass. Her thoughts would go astray sometimes from sheer weakness, and she was aware of it. There was one distinct longing in her mind, however; foolish, perhaps, but not to be silenced, and to-day she felt her head steady enough to carry her intention through.

Mechanically she took a shawl and wrapped it round her, but the low fever that had been on her for days made her quite insensible to cold at this moment. She left the room, and stood at

the head of the staircase and listened. If they knew, they would stop her going, she feared, and she was not strong enough to insist. All in the house was quiet. A spirit could not have descended the steps more noiselessly. The next minute her hand was on the garden-door, and she passed out unperceived, and disappeared up the shrubbery of evergreens.

The early dusk of winter was gathering; she must make haste. A few steps brought her to the gate by the road; but as she opened it, she felt her weakness, and her brain turned dizzy. She waited for a moment, with her eyes resting on the little church and the graveyard stones on the slope opposite. Only the lane was between, and as she looked her head grew lighter; she felt suddenly better—quite well. The snow was falling in light soft flakes as she crossed the road, but the air was so intensely still that the cold did not strike. She pushed aside the little wicket-gate, and made her way quickly to a point screened by the church from the road.

She was tired and out of breath when she got there—the old retreat by the sunken wall under the ash-tree, where she used to watch sunsets and dream to them, close to the family-vault of the Kennedys, with its several inscriptions—the stone that had been put up when Tom Kennedy died, his name the last that had been added yet.

It was a senseless fancy, no doubt, that made her feel as if in this place she were nearer Joe than in any other; but so it was, and she could not help it. It was the only spot in the world where she had a wish to come; the desire had been in her for long; she had merely been waiting for some hour when she should

feel strong enough to make the effort on her own account, before those in the house could prevent her. She would not stay more than a few minutes; but she thought she must be happier afterwards.

Why, already she felt in some way comforted. Out here she had a sense of freedom, escape, reunion; because she was alone with the thought and memory of him. Indoors they were all watching and troubling her. For, though they never said so, she knew they wished her to distract herself, were waiting and hoping to see her get over her loss, be resigned, and get well. And they were people who did not care for him. His being dead mattered only to them for her sake. She hated to be amongst them. Their kind words jarred on her. They had no glimmering of the heart-crushing sorrow they wanted to soothe.

Out here there is calm and liberty. The snow buries Nature, her life and corruption, giving them both one aspect—a semblance that is not their own. Is there no like numbing kindly veil for the spirit, that can fall on it, cover it, make sorrow one with joy, merging both in that which is neither—rest?

Coming here has done her good, as she knew it must. She can almost fancy Joe is near her, that they are talking and laughing together as they used. Then she leans against the stone, rests her head on her hands, and though her lips do not move, she can hear the voice of her soul repeating again and again, 'I love you,' and can feel he is listening.

Not a sound broke the stillness around her, binding everything as in an enchanted sleep. But the red sun had sunk; it was darkening fast; she had already stayed longer than she meant, and must

be going, she repeats aloud mechanically. One moment more. She is tired, and sits down to rest. Then a dazed feeling comes over her, and she forgets where she is.

Yes, those were good old times at the farm, when first they went there. Oddly the fancies come and go—a tribe of vivid, but trivial and unconnected memories. That was a hard winter too. A reminiscence crosses her of a day when, after a heavy snow-fall, she was looking out of the window of her room and saw Joe just underneath, bringing in an armful of logs. She shook down a quantity of snow upon him in play; it covered him over, and he stood laughing and helpless, his arms loaded, unable to defend himself, or to bring such a snowdrift into the kitchen, begging for mercy; whilst she laughed, threw down more snow, till he looked like a big Polar bear.

It is spring now, and they go walking in the lanes together—something brings it all back on her—how they loitered by a wide-running mill-stream, she standing leaning over a rustic wooden bridge, Joe gone down the bank after a water-snake or a sedge-warbler's nest, intent on his researches when roused by an exclamation of dismay from the bridge.

'What's the matter now?' he said, looking up. Her hat had been carried off by the wind into the stream; she stood there with her hair all blown about, laughing, and pointing ruefully to the water, where the current was rapidly floating down her hat to the mill-wheel hard by.

How Joe tried to stay its course and failed; how it was caught in the reeds and fished out at last with much difficulty, and in a dripping condition; how she stole his cap and walked home in it—

curiously it is all happening over again—how, when they got back, she so liked her appearance that she threatened to keep his property, and suggested he should take hers in exchange.

How they laughed! She is laughing now, and the sound of her voice recalls her to herself—in part. She is there, face to face with the wintry earth. She looked around and saw the frozen vale beneath her, stretching away to the red horizon, like an arctic sea, broken by thorn-hedges, marked here and there by a black leafless bough from which the snow has been shaken; the far still woods yonder, dreaming of spring; the wide leaden sky overhead, that looks as if it was coming down.

Her lips are pale, but the old light half gleams in her eyes as she lifts them, clasping her hands mutely, as it were, in a supreme appeal to the eternal powers around her to make her heart's pain cease, and soon.

More merciful than her children the earth looks to-night; more mighty to heal.

To Cressida, as the soft snow falls noiselessly around her, there is brought such a sweet feeling of sleep as has not come to her for long; at its touch pain dies away; her brain and heart are at ease, lulled in a last dream of reunion; and her only, her last fading, fear is to wake and find herself back in the world alone.

No more. Her guardians have missed her, and presently, suspecting where she may have gone, are coming to find her there, sunk in a perfect sleep, and to take her back home.

Nay, for hers is far off. Wherever the dead have their abiding-place, there it lies. Ere another day shall dawn she will have found it. The bird is escaping, and, freed, will know its way.



[illegible]

"I wish they
 were together—
 it will look on
 really a wide-
 eyed, no-staring
 matter. We men
 own the drink
 and it is con-
 sidered in re-
 spect an ex-
 act thing. I

When the boat rowed on, he saw the boatman's boat had been blown by the wind into the stream; and so, at there each boat had been blown about, half-drowned and perishing in way to one water, where the boat it was partly floating down her tail to the bottom of the stream.

[illegible]

the 1990s, the number of people in the world who are illiterate has increased from 1.2 billion to 1.5 billion. The number of illiterate people in the world is expected to reach 1.7 billion by the year 2015. The number of illiterate people in the world is expected to reach 1.7 billion by the year 2015. The number of illiterate people in the world is expected to reach 1.7 billion by the year 2015.

The first of these is the fact that the
 government has been unable to
 control the money supply. The
 government has been printing money
 at an ever increasing rate, and this
 has led to a massive increase in the
 money supply. This has led to a
 massive increase in the price level,
 and this has led to a massive
 increase in the cost of living. This
 has led to a massive increase in the
 cost of living, and this has led to a
 massive increase in the cost of living.

[illegible]

More potent than before,
 When the world looks on him,
 More mighty to harm.

[illegible]

None. Her guards have
sold her, and presently com-
petitive vendors have gone,
are coming to find her there, sink
in a net bet sleep, and to take her
back home.

Now, for hogs is not so. Wherever the deer lay, their drooping heads were visible. I saw only stalk down and walk and found it. The bird is a wing and feed, will know its way.





CONCLUSION.

ANOTHER spring has come and gone, transforming the face of the earth, enduing it with fresh life and loveliness, and waking the voices of joy and gladness. New faces at Monks' Orchard, which has become the property of strangers. Children go racing through the picture-gallery, and rambling the woods that ring with their merry shouts and laughter. The rectory has changed hands, too; and as the season advances events approach that will inaugurate a new era for others who have grown up among those scenes and are about to part from them now.

One day there came three to Fernswold—for the last time. It is farewell. An end and a beginning; to-morrow brings the outset of changes. Greywell is to have a new owner; the Alleynes are removing, and a few weeks hence two of the children of that house are to start on their altered life, under fresh auspices; and their paths, though different, are not to be divided.

All three visitors had been drawn to the same spot by a feeling akin to that which had led Cressida there so irresistibly.

The brother and sister came together, and stood awhile by a grave where all that was sweetest and saddest in their young experience lay entombed. For one of them, the idolatry of early love, of which—even though it have worked desolation—some imperishable essence, sweet unto death, survives.

Norbert will never know love like that love. Yet for him, as for her who stood by him, life was but just beginning, the world had heights and depths to reveal to them both, secrets of more precious and profound significance

than any which had yet passed under their ken.

The other came alone. He, too, was entering upon a brightened career, with a prosperous future in view; years well filled with noble interests and important endeavour and lasting pleasures, all to be shared by her, the loved young girl he had chosen from among all others for his lifelong companion.

Only his youth was behind him; and his farewell was to that and its divinity of feeling. Something that has been; something beyond what can ever be again.

Once a light dawned for him, in the shape of sweet human love. How it made magically clear and sure what the teaching of great men and great books conveys faintly and doubtfully!—created faith in illimitable things, woke exalted desire, gave intelligence of immortality—treasures whose ministers are chary of their bounty. He saw his last of them when he quenched that light, and wrote 'False' in the ashes.

Strange that his present feeling should be so like that of one asking forgiveness of the dead; a sense of injustice unintentionally rendered, tardily revoked, now he acknowledges what it may be nothing less than the things that had passed could have brought home to him—how little he really knew her, but how he came nearest to it in the moments when he had held her most dear!

The old dead love in his heart, that he was so eager to destroy, cries out that it was falsely slain. She is far from him; she will not hear now. Yet whether it be to dumb deaf earth or to a purified and illumined soul, his acknowledgment has gone forth. 'My spirit wronged yours when you were here. Mine the loss as well.'

He must not look back, much less think what that love, triumphant, might have done for him and for her. There is no help here. It was finished long ago. Just for one moment he wavered, before letting go his grasp on memory—that was a leave-taking for all time and eternity—and then, shutting the door on the past for ever and ever, he went forth to fulfil his course on the road of life.

The End.

A COUP D'ÉTAT.

If little seeds by slow degree
Put forth their leaves and flowers unheard,
Our love had grown into a tree,
And bloomed without a single word.

I haply hit on six o'clock,
The hour her father came from town ;
I gave his own peculiar knock,
And waited slyly, like a clown.

The door was open. There she stood,
Lifting her mouth's delicious brim.
How could I waste a thing so good !
I took the kiss she meant for him.

A moment on an awful brink—
Deep breath, a frown, a smile, a tear ;
And then, ' O Robert, don't you think
That that was rather—*cavalier* ?

POPULAR NAMES AND SINGULAR MOTTOES OF BRITISH REGIMENTS.

NEARLY all the regular regiments in the infantry of the British Army are distinguished by numerals, from No. 1 to something over No. 100 (at present 110); and the same remark, with exceptions which need not be particularised here, applies to the cavalry regiments. Besides this, most of the corps are also known by distinctive names, such as King's Own, Queen's Own, Royals, Buffs, Borderers, Scots Greys, Black Watch, Rangers, Carabineers, &c.; while certain groups of regiments are further identified as Rifles, Fusiliers, Guards, Dragoon Guards, Light Dragoons, Lancers, Hussars, Fencibles, &c. But a more curious part of the subject, and that which has suggested the present paper, is that the greater part of the regiments have attached to them some peculiar nickname, saying, shout, byword, or motto, applied to them, and to them only; sometimes by themselves, sometimes by others; occasionally satirical and unacceptable, but for the most part pleasantly recognised by the officers and men of the several corps.

This tendency towards nicknaming shows itself much more extensively than we are in the habit of supposing. It is scarcely too much to say that there is no profession, trade, avocation, or position in life without it; while the tendency is strengthened by every grouping of people into classes, parties, coteries, or cliques. Do not the students at the Home and

Colonial Society's School speak pleasantly of the establishment as the 'Ho and Co'? Is not the Medico-Chirurgical Society the 'Medico-Chi' among the members? Are not the Christ's Hospital boys the 'Bluecoat boys,' and the scholars at Winchester School the 'Wykehamists'? Has not many a boy rueful reasons to know what a 'fag' at school means? and are not 'coach' and 'scouts,' so puzzling to outsiders, every-day terms at Oxford and Cambridge? Grave clergymen indulge in a sly poke at a reverend brother who shows his 'High' proclivities by wearing an 'M.B.' vest—initials about as intelligible as Sanscrit to the uninitiated; and they have a technical meaning for a 'parson's week.' The 'Upper Ten Thousand,' in itself a specialty, was further changed to the 'Upper Ten.' Quakers used to be, if they are not now, 'Broadbrims.' Charity schoolboys wore 'muffincaps' before the introduction of recent changes in dress. Ladies a few months back wore 'pork-pies'; menfolk still wear 'wideawakes.' Policemen have not quite ceased to be 'Bobbies,' nor fourpenny-bits 'Joeys.' Sailors are 'old salts' and 'jolly tars'; clerks are 'quill-drivers.' But we need not further extend the illustrations.

It is noticeable that some regiments, especially those raised originally in Scotland, have always been strong in the number of men bearing a particular surname. The clue to this is to be found in

the fact that clanship is (or was) territorial in its tendency; the clan being a kind of large family, dividing off into households as the number of mouths increased, but still regarding a particular locality as in some sense headquarters. In the early days of the reign of George II. every officer and man of one particular Argyllshire regiment was a Campbell, to this day the family name of the ducal head of that shire; when that regiment marched to the attack, it was indeed 'The Campbells are coming!' Again, during the wars of the French Revolution, a regiment of volunteers was raised entirely among the Elliotts; the men relished the joyousness of marching to the time of the old song,

'My name it is Tam Elliott,
And wha daur meddle wi' me!'

Mottoes are much used in the army, in many cases rather unintelligible to the men of the respective regiments, among whom learning is somewhat at a low ebb. Of course plain English can be interpreted by word of mouth from man to man; and the Highlanders, Irish, and Welsh recruits soon learn to know something about the meaning of mottoes in those languages, of which there are a few examples; but if, as we are told, there are more than twenty regiments that bear Latin mottoes, this must be a sore puzzle to the men. After all, what the French call *sobriquets* and we 'nicknames' are most in favour as distinguishing marks between one corps and another. We can well imagine that some stirring incident in actual warfare earned for one regiment the title of the 'Die-hards'; that powers of endurance were displayed by the 'Rough and Toughs'; that the steadiness of another (probably Scotch) was complimented

by the designation 'Shoulder to Shoulder'; and that 'Lord Lake's Dirty Shirts' told of a regiment doing hard service in India under privations which rendered futile any appeal to the aphorism that 'Cleanliness is next to godliness.'

Let us glance at her Majesty's regiments of the line, and gather a few illustrations of this tendency to the adoption of by-names.

The 1st Regiment of Foot, being A 1 in the order of raising, are the 'Royals.' The 2d Foot have a 'Paschal lamb' as a badge on some part of the equipments, said to have been adopted because the corps was raised mainly to defend Tangier, the dowry brought by Charles II.'s Queen, Catherine of Braganza: the Paschal lamb being the badge of Portugal. Some years later the men were known satirically as 'Kirke's lambs,' in connection with events during the brutal proceedings of Judge Jefferies: The 3d Foot are known as the 'Bufs,' on account of the colour of their facings; also (seventy years ago) as the 'Nutmackers' and the 'Resurrectionists,' arising out of incidents in the Peninsular War. This is the only regiment entitled by special privilege to march through the City of London with drums beating and colours flying, the exception being a memento of the fact that the corps (in the time of Queen Elizabeth) was raised by combining various companies of the Trained Bands of London apprentices; the last year when the regiment exercised this privilege was, we believe, 1863. (An incident connected with 'Old Bufs' and 'Young Bufs' will come for notice in a later page.) The 5th Foot rank among the small number of regiments known as 'Fusileers'—a name that has lost its original meaning. The 'Old and Bold Fifth,' when on service in

the island of St. Lucia, took from slain French grenadiers sufficient white feathers to equip the whole regiment. This achievement was subsequently recognised by authoritative permission to wear a white plume in the hat or cap. An amusing illustration was afterwards afforded of the lessening of value in a coveted honour when it becomes too widely bestowed. A War Office order in 1829 appointed the white plume to be used more extensively than before in the British army; the 5th said (mentally, if not audibly), 'But we shall lose our mark of distinction if so many other fellows wear a white plume.' The War Office made it all right, by giving special permission to the 5th to wear a plume red in the upper half and white in the lower. Some of the men are said to have a theory of their own concerning the origin of this bi-colour, to the effect that in a sanguinary battle the 5th dipped the tips of their white plumes in the enemy's blood—very terrible, but not very probable.

The 6th like to be known as the 'Warwickshire Lads,' and also as the 'Saucy Sixth.' The 9th during the Peninsular War were for a time satirically known as the 'Holy Boys;' they were believed to have sold Bibles for drink, and to have sacked convents; but the men, of course, welcomed the more soldierly compliment of being the 'Fighting Ninth.' The 11th were at one time known as the 'Bloody Eleventh,' in the rough language of some of the men of other regiments, on account of the many sanguinary battles in which they had been engaged; the unpleasant designation was not, of course, permanently adopted. 'Calvert's Entire' was for many years the odd designation for the 14th, most likely from the name of the colo-

nel. The 17th are the 'Bengal Tigers,' the figure of a tiger being the regimental badge. The 19th and 20th were at one time the 'Green Howards' and the 'Howard Greens' respectively, both wearing green facings, and each having a Howard as the commanding officer; the names were certainly as nearly alike as they could well be without being actually identical. The 20th were at another time known as the 'Minden Boys,' from their gallantry shown at the battle of Minden. Why the 21st were originally known as the 'Earl of Mar's Grey Brecks' we shall perhaps not have any great difficulty in surmising. The 22d are the 'Two Two's'—an apposite, if not decidedly heroic, designation: on the Queen's birthday, review-days, and gala-days the men wear a sprig of oak in their caps or shakos, or a branch of oak on the shoulder, in recognition, it is said, of their services at the battle of Dettingen, where they rescued George II. from a position of considerable peril. The 23d are the 'Royal Welsh Fusileers,' generally associated with the Principality by the nationality of many of the men. They wear a bow of ribbon on the collar, a *relique* or memorial of the pigtail so much worn in bygone times. They also rejoice (more or less) in being the 'Royal Goats' and the 'Nanny Goats;' the 'child of the regiment' is with them a goat, who seems to imbibe a sort of military pride in being a member of this distinguished corps. When the 23d marched past Buckingham Palace on their return from the Crimea, Nanny headed the men, and came in for a share of royal recognition. The 25th are the 'King's Own Borderers,' probably from having been originally raised in one of the border counties.

The singular name of the

'Slashers' has been given to the 28th. Some say that the regiment earned it by dashing and slashing heroism at the battle of White Plains during the American War, and that the men hold themselves ready to go anywhere and do anything, in virtue of their connection with this corps. But another story is more specific and sensational, to the effect that during the war just named a Canada merchant in a severe winter refused to give comfortable billets or quarters to the women of the regiment, wives of some of the men, whereby many of the poor creatures perished with cold. The officers, exasperated at this brutality and its result, took a revenge which the merchant never forgot for the remainder of his life. They dressed themselves like savages, burst into his sitting-room one evening, and slashed off his ears: lynch-law in good sooth! The 30th are the 'Treble X's' (XXX). The 31st, the 'Young Buffs,' once earned the good opinion of a general under whom they were serving. He cried out, 'Well done, old Buffs!' 'We are not the Buffs, sir,' was the reply. 'Then well done, young Buffs!' was the final response; and the 'Young Buffs' they became. The 33d Foot wished to become known as the 'Duke of Wellington's regiment,' and he consented, but stipulated for a postponement of the naming until after his decease; the assumption of the title, therefore, did not take place until 1853. The history of the regiment tells, however, of an older and more familiar appellation, the 'Havercake Lads,' due to the fact that when first raised their recruiting-sergeant was wont to march with an oat-cake impaled on his sword. The 35th are the 'Orange Lilies,' from the colour of their facings.

The 38th are proud of the in-

cident which has earned for them the privilege of wearing the regimental number-badge on the back as well as the front of their caps and shakos. It was a bit of prompt tactics during the campaign in Egypt. Being drawn up in an extended line only two deep, they were suddenly attacked by the enemy's cavalry both in front and in rear. The commanding officer gave the word 'Rear rank, right about face; fire!' They did so, and repelled both attacks at once. The 39th are the 'Green Linnets,' from the colour of their facings. The 40th are the 'Excellers,' a pleasant pun on the Roman numerals XL. The 42d, or 'Royal Highlanders,' have had a wide and enduring reputation as the 'Black Watch,' the English form of an almost unspellable Gaelic name. They formed one among many companies raised about 1730 to preserve the peace of the Highland borders, and were regularly regimented as the Highland Regiment, afterwards as the 42d Foot. The name Black Watch is said to have been due to the contrast between their sombre tartans and the brilliant scarlet of the English regiments. The gallant 42d have been in action in nearly all parts of the world—in Flanders, in North America, in the West Indies, in Egypt, in Holland, at Corunna, in Portugal, at Toulouse (in an attack on a French redoubt 500 men of the gallant corps were reduced to 90, by whom the victory was won); at Quatre Bras, Waterloo—But we know not where to stop.

The 43d are the 'Light Bobs,' for some reason with which we are unacquainted. The 44th are, for a very simple reason, the 'Two Fours;' while the 45th, for some local incident in their past history, receive the odd cognomen of the 'Old Stabbers.' The light com-

pany of the 46th, it appears, are privileged to wear a red ball in their caps. When engaged at the battle of Brandywine, during the great American war, the company greatly annoyed the enemy, who threatened to give them no quarter if the opportunity arose. Nothing daunted, the men of the 46th resolved that there should be no mistake; they dyed the ball red, instead of the green worn by the rest of the regiment; and many years afterwards the War Office sanctioned this peculiar distinction. The 50th are the 'Devil's Royals,' and, more politely, the 'Gallant Fiftieth,' in recognition of their prowess at the battle of Vimiera. They are, or were, also the 'Blind Half Hundredth,' from having been nearly blinded by ophthalmia during the campaign in Egypt; and when on one occasion they wiped their perspiring faces with their dark cuffs, they became for the nonce the 'Dirty Half Hundredth.'

A play upon the initials of King's Own Light Infantry gives the name of the 'Kolís' to the 51st Regiment. The 53d, from the colour of their facings, rejoice in the *sobriquet* of the 'Brickbats,' but more willingly in the whimsical name of the 'Five and Threepennies,' from 5 and 3, and from that sum being the daily pay of the lowest subaltern officer. The 55th are the 'Two Fives;' and the 56th the 'Pompadours,' from the ruby-purple colour of their facings. The 58th are the 'Steelbacks,' probably for some such reason as that which earned for the Confederate General Jackson the familiar name of Stonewall Jackson. It was a singular circumstance in the history of the regiment that, a few years ago, the colonel, the lieutenant-colonel, one captain, one lieutenant, and one ensign all bore the surname

of Wynyard. The 59th are the 'Lilywhites.' The flattering name of the 'Springers' was given to the 62d on account of their rapid pursuit of the enemy after the battle of Trois Rivières, during the American war. At the subsequent battle of New Orleans a particular corps, considering itself to be badly supported, murmured, 'This would not have happened if the Springers had been here with us!' The 68th are not sorry to be known as the 'Faithful Durhams;' while the 69th, from the colour of their facings and the district in which they were first raised, are the 'Lincoln Greens.' The designation 'Seven and Sixpennies' was built upon the numerical denomination of the 76th, and also, it is said, upon the fact that seven-and-sixpence is, or was, the daily pay of one grade among commissioned officers. The 'Two Sevens' and the 'Pothooks' are not unknown to the men of the 77th. The 78th, the 'King's Own Men,' probably from having been originally raised in one particular part of Scotland, have generally been rich in Mackenzies; four Mackenzies were commissioned officers in this regiment at one time, about a dozen years ago.

There is a pleasant bit of gossip connected with the 83d or 'Glasgow Regiment.' The good city undertook to raise a corps of a thousand men during the American war. Provost Inglis and two gentlemen named Gray and Finlay set the movement on foot. They went all about Glasgow, beating up for recruits, Gray acting as sergeant and Finlay as piper. Meeting some friends the first day, they were asked what success they had had, to which the provost replied, 'There's a sergeant and a piper, and I am the regiment.' Nevertheless, the

full complement of a thousand men was soon collected. The 87th are the 'Faugh-a-Ballagh Boys.' When attacking the French at the sanguinary battle of Barossa, the men rushed on with an old Irish shout or war-cry, well known in the faction fights of Munster and Connaught, 'Faugh-a-Ballagh' i.e. 'Clear the way!' And they *did* clear the way, as the enemy found to their cost. The 88th, the 'Connaught Rangers,' can always easily be recruited in that province of Ireland. The 94th were once known as the 'Garvies.' Some say that the first recruits were lean and lanky fellows, and that garvie is Scotch for a lean herring. But others stoutly maintain that a garvie, though a small herring, is not necessarily lean, and that the recruits were plucky little fellows, not by any means characterised by lankiness. The 97th are the 'Celestials,' from the colour of their facings.

Nor are the cavalry regiments less prone than the infantry to adopt odd or peculiar designations, nicknames, out-of-the-way phrases, and special mottoes—less inclined to be able to say, 'This is mine, and not yours.' The Royal Horse Guards are the 'Oxford Blues,' so called from the colour of the uniform, a contrast to the usual scarlet of our regular army. The 2d Dragoon Guards, the 'Scots Greys,' bear a motto denoting that, though second in numerical order in that arm of the service, they are in other things 'second to none.' But they also have a crest of which the men are proud. When Sir William Ponsonby led them at Waterloo against a crack French regiment, a desperate struggle arose around the eagle or standard, which proudly bore the words 'Jena,' 'Auster-

litz,' 'Wagram,' 'Eylau,' 'Friedland.' Ponsonby was killed, but the eagle was captured by Sergeant Ewart, who was thereupon promoted to the rank of ensign for his prowess; and ever since then the Scots Greys have enjoyed the privilege of adopting an eagle with outstretched wings as a crest or badge, the only thing of the kind in the British army. The 5th Dragoon Guards, originally an Irish regiment of horse, were once known as the 'Green Horse,' from the colour of their facings. The 7th Hussars pride themselves, not on a special designation, but on being permitted to wear shirt-collars. 'When the regulation was promulgated,' we are told, 'for discontinuing the display of shirt-collars, by hiding them beneath the stocks, it did not meet the approval of Lord Anglesey, who was colonel of the regiment at that time.' His lordship's influence being great, the order was not enforced so far as concerned that particular corps. There is one regiment of infantry in enjoyment of the same privilege, and probably for a similar reason; a bit of white gives an air of cleanliness and smartness on parade; in the rough work of active service it would be 'nowhere.'

If time and space permitted, we might search the pages of Cannon's comprehensive *Records of the British Army* and *James's Military Dictionary* for many other curious illustrations of the matter now under consideration; but enough has been given to show that the by-names or nicknames are numerous, varied, and often whimsical. Many of the officers and men themselves are but little acquainted with some of them, arising out of incidents which have almost gone out of memory.

SIGHS FROM A LONDON WORKHOUSE.

AN inquest was some time ago held at the east of London on the body of an aged man, whose death had taken place under painful circumstances. The deceased, with his wife, who was in her seventy-fifth year, had occupied a miserable lodging of one small back room, the whole of the furniture of which consisted of two old chairs, a box which served for a table, and a heap of rags which was their bed. The man, being unable to work on account of feebleness and failing sight, and having no friends, had applied to the parish for relief, and during the past nine months had been allowed out-door help to the extent of two four-pound loaves, a pound and a half of meat, and two-and-sixpence in money weekly; and on this the old couple had somehow contrived to prolong existence, until in the case of the man Nature could hold out no longer, and one bitterly cold morning the woman found her old husband stark by her side. Medical testimony was forthcoming to the effect that death was the result of starvation pure and simple; and it having in the course of the inquiry transpired that the relieving officer had more than once, but in vain, suggested that the destitute couple should become inmates of the workhouse, the coroner thought it his duty to take the starved man's relict soundly to book for her reprehensible neglect of parochial asylum. He was at some pains to explain to her that if a person neglected the means of retaining life when it was in his power to do so, that virtually he committed suicide, which was an

offence abominable in the eyes of God and of men. But the coroner might as well have addressed his severe admonition to the wall, with her back to which the wrinkled offender stood, as to her, until the worthy official came to touch on the subject of 'graves,' which seemed to act as the prick of a spur on her dull intellect.

'Are you aware, ma'am,' the coroner remarked, 'that an ancient law, which is not yet repealed, consigns the individual who compasses his own death to an ignominious grave?'

'What kind of a grave might that be, kind sir?' the old woman asked, with an anxious look.

The coroner enlightened her as to the degradation that attended the interment of a *felo-de-se*, not forgetting to mention the 'sharp-pointed stake' or the 'torchlight.' Indeed, he was proceeding to expatiate on this last-mentioned feature of the business, when the old lady, with some show of impatience, interrupted him.

'But do they let you have an el-lum coffin?' she asked eagerly.

Mr. Coroner thought it not improbable.

'And do they let you lie by yourself in the grave where they bury you?'

The coroner, under the impression that the old woman was possessed of a superstitious dread of churchyard isolation, replied, with some emphasis, that she might rely on that; that it was scarcely likely that Christian folk would choose to lay their dead very close to one whose grave was so dishonoured.

'Then,' exclaimed the shocking old sinner, 'that settles it. I'm glad to hear that there is somehow a way of getting a quiet grave. Anything—anything,' she repeated with energy, 'is better than being buried in a heap as paupers are buried. That was my Charlie's opinion, and it is mine. It wasn't our dread of living in the workhouse that kept us from it; it was the horror of dying there.'

But the dark design so plainly implied by her outrageous language was not carried out. It was true that, still muttering defiantly, she was enabled to hobble safely out of court; but within a week, while she was in the very act of masticating a piece of parochial mutton she was so little grateful for, she was seized with a fit of coughing, and falling out of her chair hurt her head so seriously that she did not recover her senses for many hours afterwards, when, to her affright and dismay, she awoke to find herself an inmate of the very establishment against which she had expressed herself so strongly.

Hearing of the odd case I went to see the contumacious old soul, and found her at deadly feud with the whole staff of attendants and nurses, including the matron herself, her idea evidently being that if she became unbearably 'saucy' they would turn her out; but finding, after a protracted effort, that nobody evinced the least disposition to take offence at the outrageous epithets and personal abuse she launched at them, there she lay bitterly chafing and fuming, and rapidly fretting herself towards the grave which she regarded with so much terror. I am glad to be able to relate that the main purpose of my visit to her was to comfort her with the assurance that a lady had undertaken that when she

died her funeral should be paid for, and that not only should she have the much-coveted 'el-lum' coffin, but that the mound that covered her should be planted with flowers. She was so much rejoiced at the cheering prospect that she immediately laid herself straight down in her bed, with the intention, I believe, of dying there and then; instead of which, however, she fell into a long calm sleep (the first for a week), and waking up, improved in health so rapidly that in less than a month she was partaking heartily of the liberal 'old women's ward' rations, and is likely to live for some time to come.

I took advantage of my three or four visits to the workhouse in question to 'sound' a few of the aged inmates concerning the delicate question on which my old woman held such extreme views, and I am bound to say that her prejudice against pauper burial could hardly be called exceptional. One or two there were amongst the men with whom I gossiped on the subject who affected to treat it as one that was not worth while wasting a thought on, and who recklessly declared that they didn't care a button what became of their bodies when they had no further use for them; but it almost invariably happened that those who so expressed themselves were fellows in robust health, and not so old but that they might, with good luck, by and by get out of the 'house,' and become eligible for the good offices of the paid undertaker. Others there were who professed not to care very much 'how it went;' but these were generally found to be men who had friends or relatives 'outside,' and who clung desperately to the hope that 'for their own sake' they would avoid the disgrace of having it said that their father, or

their uncle, or their poor old brother, was buried 'with his name chalked on his coffin-lid.' As one aged gentleman pathetically put it,

'It don't make any difference, of course, sir; it ain't as though at the sound of the last trumpet the name-plates on our coffins will be wanted as a guide by Him who calls us to know who we are; but it's the bitter thought that a good name should become so degraded. Mine has been a good name, sir. I've seen it on the face of bills good for five hundred pounds scores and scores of times. For nearly thirty years it was a name common in the mouths of merchants and men in a fair position in life, to say nothing of its holding its place over one shop in Bishops-gate-street for more than a quarter of a century. But it is all gone now; except the good name I have nothing to leave behind me, and it is hard to think that it will be buried with me in the shape of being writ on my coffin-lid with a bit of chalk.'

I thought so too, but endeavoured to comfort the old pauper by pointing out that it mattered very little, chalk writing or plate of brass, when once the earth hid it.

'But a man does not like the idea of being wrongly described even to his coffin,' he urged; 'and he is very likely to be here, I do assure you, sir. It is a dreadfully ignorant man they have got to look after the coffins now. The shameful mistakes he makes ought to be brought before the Board. I've seen 'im with my own eyes, so I know. Why, it ain't a long while since when there was quite a respectable old gentleman died broken-hearted here after a stay of six weeks. His name was Job Manistre. Well, sir, you'd hardly believe it, when the coffins

were being brought out ready to be carried to the cemetery, there was wrote on his coffin-lid "Joe Banister," with no more respect for the poor man than though he had been part of an old staircase.'

But it was those who had outlived or been discarded by relatives and children, and who in their extreme age and abject poverty were without a friend in the world, who seemed to take most sorely to heart the inevitable end. Over and over again, and in almost the same words, did I hear the objections of the starved old man's widow repeated—'It isn't that living here is so bad; it is the thought of dying here, and being buried as they bury 'em all.' Of course it is not much, and it would never do to study too closely the whims and fancies of those who are dependent for the means of existence on the energy and industry of their fellow-creatures; but I can scarcely think that Boards of guardians generally are aware how much these poor pensioners make of the grievance of the name merely chalked on the coffin-lid, 'with no more ceremony; my good sir, nor not so much,' as one of them remarked, 'than though you was going by rail in the luggage-van. Not so much, for then you *would* have a printed ticket tacked on to you.' It may be quite true that to 'pamper' pauperism is a sure way of filling our workhouses, but there is a wide difference between pampering a man and observing such rigid economy in your dealings with him that you do not scruple to make his latter days miserable, to say nothing of distracting his thoughts from more solemn matters, in order to effect a saving of ninepence. The sort of 'plate' that would answer the purpose would not cost more;

just a small square of block-tin, say, with the letters of the name stamped thereon.

I found that the yearning after an 'el-lum' coffin was universal; but this is an extreme of fastidiousness that cannot be entertained. The ordinary parish coffin is shaped out of pine-wood of decent substance, and made sombre by a coating of lamp-black. By the side of the 'highly polished elms,' or the 'best superfine cloth-covered, with silver nails,' advertised by professional funeral 'performers,' it would present a mean appearance; but for that matter so does a fustian jacket beside a garment of broadcloth, and yet the one is as useful as the other.

I was given to understand, however, though not very definitely, that it was the actual burial—the way in which deceased paupers were consigned to mother earth—that made the subject such a sad one to reflect on. There was no other way of satisfying myself on this score than by being present at some burying-place when the last funeral rites were being performed under poor-law auspices. This might be easily accomplished, and it ought to be taken for granted that the melancholy business as transacted at one cemetery was pretty much what it would be found at another.

On the northern road, in which direction lie the united cemeteries of St. Pancras' and St. Marys' Islington, I had frequently observed on certain days of the week an odd-looking black carriage of the composite order. A respectable vehicle enough, and drawn by a pair of stout handsome horses. That it was a mourning-coach I was of course aware; that it was a hearse as well was evident from the fact that the great square space in

front, and above which the driver sat, was not unfrequently so very full of coffins, little and big, that the overhanging hammercloth revealed bluntly the shape of the ends of the boxes in which the mortal remains were deposited; but I did not discover that it was a parochial conveyance until one morning, while out walking High-gateward, I espied the black coach in question at a roadside inn, with the horses partaking of necessary refreshment from their nose-bags. The compartment in which the coffins are bestowed was empty; the coach portion in which mourners were bestowed was tenantless. Curiosity led me to step into the tavern to discover what had become of the bluff coachman, with his ruddy visage and his blacktop-boots, I had so oftenseen urging his sable team at a brisk trot towards the cemetery. I found the individual in question at the bar partaking of a pint of ale, and in a kind of tap-room near at hand there were the mourners. I cannot say that I was much shocked at finding a number of persons warm, or rather cold, from the burying-ground seeking public-house comfort. It is the common practice even amongst folks whose condition of life is different from that of the pauper. I have seen at an hostel near the City cemetery at Ilford, on a Sabbath afternoon too, quite a crowd of black carriages and hearses blocking the broad space before the doors, with the undertakers and their merry men enjoying themselves to their hearts' content in the way of gin-swigging and pipe-smoking, while the great 'refreshment-room' at the rear of the premises has been filled with 'mourners'—men, women, and children; and through a stifling haze of tobacco smoke there were to be seen amongst the quart pots

and drinking measures on the table pyramids of black hats, the 'weepers' attached to which were trailing down and dabbling in the spilt liquor. It was not very astonishing therefore to find that the custodian of the parochial vehicle did not scruple to halt on his homeward journey for a 'bait and a sup.' I regret to relate, however, that although the last-mentioned individual was in a position to regale on bread-and-cheese and ale, his unlucky 'passengers' were by their poverty denied the poorest refreshment the tavern professed to supply. It was a wintry morning, and the newly-lit tap-room fire spluttered at the green sticks with which it was lit, and there sat the mourners who had come down with the recently deposited coffin-load at a table which was as bare as the cupboard to which Mother Hubbard in vain resorted for refreshment for her canine friend. They were not in workhouse attire all of them, the exceptions being, I suppose, poor folk whose relatives had died in the parochial asylum, and who had begged permission to see them into their grave. But their penury was so extreme that no one had been able to take to black crape or any other outward token of grief. They one and all wore only the badges of mourning with which Nature had endowed them—eyes red with weeping, and cheeks pallid with doleful reflection on the miserable ending. It seemed too preposterous to ask a number of persons,—strangers too,—with the solemn words of the burial service still ringing in their ears, 'what they would take to drink.' Otherwise it would have afforded me much pleasure to see them doing as the comfortable-looking coachman was, and I have no doubt that a liberal allowance of such mild entertain-

ment would have done them a great deal of good.

I ascertained that the next batch of paupers would be brought down for burial on the following Tuesday, and that it was due at the cemetery about ten o'clock. It was a bitterly cold morning, snow was on the ground to a depth of half a foot, and the roadway and the hedges were sparkling with hoar frost. Being at the cemetery in good time, I made my way to the place of parochial sepulture to see what preparation had been made. I found it to be a wholesale preparation. As remarked the old fellow who so bitterly resented his name being chalked on his coffin-lid, 'it makes really no difference;' but there can be no question that a parish grave of modern construction is not an affair the contemplation of which is calculated to favourably impress a person inevitably doomed thereto. It may not unreasonably be urged that burial-ground is precious—worth more per foot perhaps as regards many of our fashionable cemeteries than the precious earth at London's heart's core on which they build banks and insurance offices. But this does not alter the fact that the parish pit-hole is an ugly thing to see, especially when the mounds of raw clay thrown up from the chasm are covered with snow, and the iron-bound boards that temporarily cover the great hole are so thickly coated with the white of frost that the sparrows who have been hopping there have left the imprint of their busy feet. The way it is managed seems to be to bury a dozen paupers, more or less, in one grave, and after it is filled in to raise one gigantic mound of clay above the spot. Only the clay, however. In a line with the newly-dug trenches were many of these small hills; but

though they were overgrown with rank weeds and grass it was evident that no verdant mantle of green turf had been spared for any one of them—no stone, no flowers; nothing but an iron ticket of the size and shape of a workman's shoe-sole, and with a letter and a number on it to denote, I suppose, when the short lease of the land granted to its occupiers would expire, so that new tenants might come in. I lingered at the frosty spot until the parish hearse arrived, and the bodies, having been first carried into the church, were decently lifted out by the grave-diggers. There were not many mourners that day—not so many as there were coffins, if my counting was correct; but three of them were women, and as they stood there in a melancholy row while the blackened boxes were being lowered, with the bleak north wind setting the skirts of their flimsy raiment fluttering and their teeth chattering, and causing their noses to glow with a dull purple hue on their pallid faces—as one noted these evidences of the life they lead, and probably would continue to lead until Death the deliverer came to the rescue, it seemed easier to be sorry for those who were going back to the 'house,' taking with them this grim haunting of what, after all, the end must be, than for those who, though consigned to the humblest of beds, were happily out of the world and its worries.

But I cannot help repeating that since it could be done so cheaply something might be done to make the pauper's grave a little more like that of other folks. It seemed to me that the poor workhouse mourners, as they looked around them from the frosty mound that edged the black hole, thought so too. They are only graves of the poorest class that are to be found

in the vicinity of the patch hired by the Poor-law Board, but there was scarcely one that was not adorned by some token of affection—crosses, vases, pictures, and images under glass shades, with bright bunches and bouquets of everlasting dyed grass and flowers.

'In God's acre, *i.e.* the churchyard, pride has no place,' is a favourite theme with moralists and pulpit preachers. The tolling of the bell dissolves all social distinctions, and dead Lazarus has as good a title to his 'six feet of English earth' as defunct Dives, albeit the latter was driven to his last narrow abode with as much, or even more, ceremony, with a difference of colour only, as when he set out to dine with my Lord Mayor at the Mansion House, or when, his wife and daughters instead of the horses wearing feathers, he carried them to the opera. On the hillocky domain of which the sexton holds the keys variety fails us, as does proverbial philosophy, for here the rule is not 'as you make your bed so you must lie.' There is only one sort of bed-maker and one sort of bed for all comers. The common lot, and so forth.

But come to regard the matter practically, and it is soon discovered that there is a deal of fudge in this kind of holding forth—from a worldly point of view, that is to say. No social distinctions in a place of public burial! Ask any undertaker what he has to say on this head. Why, he has as many 'classes' on his funeral price-list as the draper has in his silk department. There is the 'extra superfine,' the 'superfine,' the 'very good,' the 'ordinary,' and the 'common.' The undertaker has the greatest contempt for the 'common,' as indeed have the cemetery authorities. Com-

mercially speaking, 'they don't pay house-room.' It has been my experience to be assured of this from the lips of a cemetery functionary with whom I had sad dealing.

'You see,' he explained, 'the site you have chosen will in a short time be much improved, and consequently will increase in value.'

'How improve?' I asked him.

'Well, you see, sir, it is in the plan of the cemetery to have a broad path from where we stand straight to the church-door.'

'But,' said I, pointing towards

a long array of recently made mounds, 'what as to those?'

'Those?' he repeated, as though not catching my meaning; and then it suddenly struck him, and he replied, with a shrug of his shoulders, 'Those are merely common interments, sir; they don't interfere with the ultimate plan in the least.'

From which I could draw but one inference, namely, that when the time for the path was come nothing would be easier than to shovel off the mounds, run the heavy roller over the ground, and make all ready for the gravel.

CHANCE.

A word unspoken, a hand unpressed,
A look unseen, or a thought unguessed;
And souls that were kindred may live apart
Never to meet or to know the truth,
Never to know how heart beat with heart
In the dim past days of a wasted youth.

She shall not know how his pulses leapt
When over his temples her tresses swept;
As she leaned to give him the jasmine wreath,
She felt his breath, and her face flushed red
With the passionate love that choked her breath,
And saddens her life now her youth is dead.

A faded woman who waits for death,
And murmurs a name beneath her breath;
A cynical man who scoffs and jeers
At women and love in the open day,
And at night-time kisses with bitter tears
A faded fragment of jasmine spray.

J. M.

THE HAPPY VALLEY.

A Reminiscence of the Himalayas.

THE privilege which the families of officers in the service of the State may be said exclusively to possess, of reproducing in Upper India—and especially in the Himalayan stations, and valley of Dhera Dhoon—the stately or cottage homes of England, is perhaps one, to a great extent, unfamiliar to their relatives at home; and it is scarcely too much to say that the general public, which, as a rule, considers the Indian climate an insuperable barrier to all enjoyment, has but a faint idea of that glorious beauty, which is no ‘fading flower,’ in this ‘Happy Valley,’ with its broad belt of virgin forest, that lies between the Himalayas proper and the sharp ridges of the wild Sewalic range. The latter forms a barrier between the sultry plains and the cool and romantic retreats, where the swords of our gallant defenders may be said to rest in their scabbards, and where, surrounded by the pleasures of domestic life, health and happiness may, in the intervals of piping times of peace, be enjoyed to their fullest extent.

In such favoured spots the exile from home may live, seemingly, for the present only; but, in truth, it is not so, for even under such favoured circumstances the tie with our natal place is never relaxed, and the hope of future return to it adds just that touch of pensiveness—scarcely sadness—which is the delicate neutral tint that brings out more forcibly the gorgeous colours of the picture.

The gaieties of the mountain stations of Mussoorie and Landour were now approaching their periodical close, in the early part of October, when the cold season commences. The attractive archery meetings on the green plateaux of the mountain-spurs had ceased, and balls and sumptuous dinner-parties were becoming fewer and fewer; while daily one group of friends after another, ‘with lingering steps and slow,’ on rough hill-ponies or in quaint jam-pans, were wending their way some six or seven thousand feet down the umbrageous mountain-sides, watched from above by those who still lingered behind, until they seemed like toilsome emmets in the far distance.

Now that our summer companions were gone we used to while away many an hour with our glasses, scanning in that clear atmosphere the vast plains stretched out beneath us like a rich carpet of many colours, but in which forms were scarcely to be traced at that distance. Here, twisted silver threads represented some great river; there, a sprinkling of rice-like grains, the white bungalows of a cantonment; while occasionally a sombre mass denoted some forest or mango tope. Around us, and quailing under fierce gusts of wind from the passes of the snowy range rising in peaks to nearly twice the altitude of the Alps, the gnarled oaks, now denuded of their earlier garniture of parasitical ferns, that used to adorn their mossy branches with Nature’s own point

lace, seemed almost conscious of approaching winter.

Landour, now deserted, save by a few invalid soldiers and one or two resident families, had few attractions. The snow was lying deep on the mountain-sides, and blocking up the narrow roads. But winter in the Himalayas is a season of startling phenomena; for it is then that thunder-storms of appalling grandeur are prevalent, and to a considerable extent destructive. During the night, amidst the wild conflict of the elements, would, not unfrequently, be heard the bugles of the soldiers' Sanatorium, calling to those who could sleep to arouse themselves, and hasten to the side of residents whose houses had been struck by the electric fluid.

Still, we clung to our mountain-home to the last, although we knew that summer awaited us in the valley below, and that in an hour and a half we might with ease exchange an almost hyperborean climate for one where summer is perennial, or seems so—for the rainy season is but an interlude of refreshing showers.

At length an incident occurred which somewhat prematurely influenced our departure.

As we were sitting at an early breakfast one morning with the children, Khalifa, a favourite domestic, and one who rarely failed to observe that stately decorum peculiar to Indian servants, rushed wildly into the room, with every appearance of terror, screaming, 'Janwar! Burra janwar, sahib!'^{*} at the same time pointing to the window.

We could not at first understand what the poor fellow meant; but on looking out, were not a little disconcerted at the sight which presented itself.

Crouched on the garden-wall

^{*} 'Wild beast! Big wild beast, sir!'

was a huge spotted animal of the leopard species. It looked, however, by no means ferocious, but, on the contrary, to be imploring compassion and shelter from the snowstorm. Still, notwithstanding its demure cat-like aspect, its proximity was by no means agreeable. With a strange lack of intelligence, the brute, instead of avoiding the cold, had evidently become bewildered, and crawled up the mountain-side. As we could scarcely be expected to extend the rites of hospitality to such a visitor, the harmless discharge of a pistol insured his departure at one bound, and with a terrific growl.

Wild beasts are rarely seen about European stations. Those who like them must go out of their way to find them. But perhaps stupefied by cold while asleep, and pinched by hunger, as on the present occasion, they may lose their usual sagacity.

Having got rid of our unwelcome visitor, we determined at once to leave our mountain-home.

The servants were only too glad to hasten our departure, and in the course of an hour everything was packed up, and we were ready for the descent into the plains.

Notwithstanding the absence of a police force, robberies of houses are almost unknown; and therefore it was only necessary for us to draw down the blinds and lock the main door, leaving the furniture to take care of itself.

The jam-pans and little rough ponies were ready; the servants, although shivering in their light clothing, more active than I had ever before seen them; and in the course of another hour we were inhaling the balmy air of early summer.

The pretty little hotel of Rajpore, at the base of the mountain, was now reached; and before us

lay the broad and excellent road, shaded with trees, which, in the course of another twenty minutes, brought us to the charming cantonment of Deyrah. All Nature seemed to be rejoicing; the birds were singing; the sounds of bubbling and splashing waters (mountain-streams diverted from their natural channels, and brought into every garden), and hedges of the double pink and crimson Bareilly rose* in full bloom, interspersed with the oleander, and the mehndi (henna of Scripture) with its fragrant clusters, filling the air with the perfume of mignonette, presented a scene of earthly beauty which cannot be surpassed.

'How stupid we were,' I remarked, looking back at our late home, now a mere black speck on the top of the snowy mountain far above,—'how very foolish and perverse to have fancied ourselves more English in the winter up there, when we might all this time have been leading the life of Eden, in this enchanting spot!'

'Indeed we were,' replied my companion. 'But it is the way with us in India. We give a rupee for an English daisy, and cast aside the honeyed champah.'

In India there is no difficulty in housing oneself. No important agents are necessary, and advertising is scarcely known. Accordingly, without ceremony, we took quiet possession of the first vacant bungalow which we came to, and our fifteen domestics did not seem to question for a moment the propriety of the occupation. Under our somewhat despotic government, are not the sahib lögt above petty social observances?

While A. was busily employed getting his guns ready and preparing for shikari in the adjacent forest and jungles, which swarm with peafowl, partridges, quail, pigeons, and a variety of other game, my first care was to summon the resident māli (gardener), and ascertain how the beautiful and extensive garden of which we had taken possession* might be further stocked.

'Mem sahib,† said the quiet old gardener, with his hands in a supplicatory position, 'there is abundance here of everything—aloo, lal sāg, anjir, padina, baingan, piyaz, khira, shalgham, kobs, ajmud, kharbuza, amb, amrut, anar, narangi—†'

'Stay!' I interrupted; 'that is enough.'

But the old māli had something more to add:

'Mem sahib, all is your own, and your slave shall daily bring his customary offering, and flowers for the table; and the protector of the poor will not refuse bakshees for the bearer.'

I promised to be liberal to the poor old man, and then proceeded to inspect the flower-garden.

Here I was surprised to find a perfect fraternisation between the tropical flora and our own. Amongst flowers not unfamiliar to the European were abundance of the finest roses, superb crimson and gold poincianas, the elegant hybiscus, graceful ipomœas, and convolvuli of every hue, the purple amaranth, the variegated double balsam, the richest marigolds, the pale-blue clusters of the plantago, acacias, jasmines, oranges, and pomegranates, intermixed with

* House-rent is paid monthly in India, in arrear.

† My lady.

‡ Potato, spinach, fig, mint, egg-plant, onion, cucumber, turnip, cabbage, parsley, melon, mango, guava, pomegranate, orange.

* A remarkable plant. It is in constant bloom. On every spray there is a central crimson blossom, which only lasts one day, surrounded by five or six pink ones, which remain for many days.

† Dominant class.

our own pansies, carnations, cinerarias, geraniums, fuchsias, and a wealth of blossoms impossible to remember by name.

'If there is a paradise on earth, it is this, it is this!'

Far more beautiful to the homely eye are such gardens than those of Shalimar and Pinjore, with their costly marble terraces, geometrical walks, fountains and cascades falling over sculptured slabs.

Nor are we in India confined to the enjoyment of Nature. Art* finds its way to us from Europe, and literature here receives the warmest welcome. Our pianos, our musical-boxes—our costly and richly bound illustrated works, fresh from England—the most thrilling romances of fiction, and all the periodicals of the day, are regularly accumulated in these charming Indian retreats, and keep up the culture of the mind in a valley whose 'glorious beauty' is, as I have said, no 'fading flower,' but the home of the missionary, and the resort of the war-worn soldier or truth-loving artist.

Nor is this all. Around Deyrah is some of the most exquisitely beautiful cave scenery, comparatively unknown even to Europeans; such, for example, as the wondrous natural tunnel, whose sides shine with the varied beauty of the most delicate mosaics, and are lit up by rents in the hill above; the 'dropping cave' of Sansadhara, 'bosomed high in

tufted trees;' and the strange ancient shrines sculptured in the romantic glen of Tope-Kesur-Mahadeo.

Of these, Sansadhara has lately been made the subject of a beautiful photograph, which, however, fails to convey the exquisite charm of the original; but the natural tunnel and Tope-Kesur-Mahadeo have never been presented by the artist to the public, although there are unique sketches of them in the fine collection of a lady* who, as wife of a former Indian Commander-in-Chief, had opportunities afforded to few of indulging her taste.

One might exhaust volumes in attempting to describe such scenes, and even then fail to do them the faintest justice. The Alps, with all their beauty, lose much of their grandeur after one has been in daily contemplation of the majestic snowy range of the Himalayas, while the forests and valleys that skirt its base have no counterpart in Europe. In these partial solitudes we lose much of our conventionality. The mind is to a certain extent elevated by the grand scale on which Nature around is presented. The occasional alarm of war teaches the insecurity of all earthly happiness. Our life is subject to daily introspection, and before the mind's eye is the sublime prospect, perhaps at no very distant period, of a Christian India rising from the ruins of a sensuous idolatry in immortal beauty.

L. A.

* There is no intention of disparaging beautiful native art.

* Lady Gomm.

ACROSTIC RULES.

1. A First Prize of £25, a Second Prize of £10, and a Third Prize of £5 will be awarded to the three persons who guess the greatest number of the fourteen Acrostics which will appear in *London Society* during the year, viz. in the Christmas Number for 1877, in the Numbers from January to December 1878, and in the Holiday Number.

2. The prizes will be paid in money, without any stipulation whatever.

3. If two or more solvers shall have guessed the same number of Acrostics at the end of the year, and so have tied for the Prizes, the Editor reserves to himself the right of determining how these 'ties' shall be guessed off.

4. Answers to the Acrostics must be sent by letter (not by post-card), not later than the 10th of each month, addressed to the Acrostic Editor of *London Society*, at Messrs. Sampson Low & Co.'s, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C.

5. The answers should be signed with a legibly-written pseudonym, and the names and addresses of the prize-winners will be required for publication.

No. XIV.—DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

A Double Acrostic is this, as no doubt
You will see at a glance when you once make it out.

- I. This must be coriaceous, should be neat.
- II. Amusing scenes of national conceit.
- III. The Board of Works might mourn of him bereft.
- IV. Of two brave columns this alone was left.
- V. This beat the Moor on many a battlefield.
- VI. Borne on a breastplate—mark, not on a shield.

THEFT.

The list of correct Answers to this Acrostic will be published in the January Number of LONDON SOCIETY. Answers must be addressed to the Acrostic Editor of LONDON SOCIETY, 188 Fleet-street, London, E.C., as letters, not on post-cards, and must reach this address by December the 10th.

ANSWER TO No. XIII. (TRIPLE ACROSTIC).

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| 1. N | E | W |
| 2. E | R | A |
| 3. W | A | R |

Correct solutions to the above have been received from Aces, Acipenser, Alma, Araba, Arno, Beatrice W., Bon Gualtier, Cadwallader, Caller Herrins, Cats & Co., Cerberus, C O M, Coup d'Essai, Croydon Cat, Cwrws, Domino, Double Elephant, Elaine, Elisha, Elsinore, Etak, Excelsior-Jack, General Buncombe, Gnat, Gogledd Cymru, Griselda, Half-and-Half, Hampton Courtier, Hazlewood, H. B., Heartie, Hepton Hill, Hibernicus, Incoherent, Jessica, Kanitboko, Lizzie, Mrs. Noah, Mungo-Puss-Tory, Murra, Myrtle, One A.M., Pat, Patty Probity, Penton, Pud, Racer, Roe, Shaftan, Sir Hans Sloane, Smashjavelin, Snodgrass, Tabitha, Tempus Fugit, The Borogoves, The Snark, Three Gorbs, Too Late, Try, Tweedledum, Verulam, Ximena, and Yours truly—63 correct; none incorrect.

Correct solutions of No. XII. were received from Caller Herrins and Coup d'Essai, and were duly credited.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

No other words than those already published can be accepted as answers to the lights of No. XII. 'Eye' does not agree with 'those.'

It is necessary again to say, that for the fifth light of No. XI. 'Tones' is not admissible. Verulam's case is a hard one, perhaps, as he has guessed all the other acrostics, and failed only in this light. But he is not alone in his failure. If musical tones were of yore between three and twenty, then 'tones,' assuming they are limited to musical ones, will not accord with 'between a dozen and a score.' 'These (i.e. teens) are but seven' do not imply that there were ever more or less. 'Of yore' does not imply that they are different now. 'Yet' does not necessarily denote contrast. There are hundreds of tones; but 'teens' always were seven and between a dozen and a score, and they are so still.

Arno gave 'Tulips' instead of 'Taurus' for the sixth light of No. XII, and therefore was not credited.

Extra Christmas Number

OF

LONDON SOCIETY.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
THE MASTER OF THE GOLDEN HOUSE AND HIS FIVE GOLD KNOCKERS. <i>With Two Whole-Page Illustrations by D. H. Friston</i>	1
Chap. I. The Man of Gold.	
II. Showing that a Man never loses by Politeness.	
III. The Three Glorious Days of July.	
IV. Five Golden Knockers.	
V. Wanted, an Heir.	
VI. The Events of the Visit.	
VII. Oxford.	
VIII. The Discovery of the Pedigree.	
IX. The Journey to Brettingham.	
X. A Golden Knecker.	
THE FAMILY GHOST	34
A ROMANCE IN BORROWED PLUMES. <i>With Whole-Page Illustration by Miriam Kerns</i>	36
BEAUTY AND THE BEAST	43
SAINT OR SINNER? A MARRYING SPECULATION. <i>With Whole-Page Illustration</i>	44
THE ARGUMENT IN FAVOUR OF GHOSTS	51
MY CHRISTMAS FAIRY. <i>With Whole-Page Illustration by Laura Blood</i>	56
THE EVES OF TWO CHRISTMAS NUMBERS. <i>With Whole-Page Illus- tration by Harry Furness</i>	57
GHOSTS	67
DICK ALLEN'S MERRY CHRISTMAS. <i>With Whole-Page Illustration by A. C. Corbould</i>	70
JOE'S BESPEAK: A PANTALOOON'S STORY	75
A STRANGE STORY OF CHRISTMAS FIRELIGHT. <i>With Whole-Page Illustration</i>	77
BOGEY	96

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IMPORTANT TO ALL!

Especially to CONSULS, SHIP CAPTAINS, EMIGRANTS, and
EUROPEANS generally, who are

VISITING OR RESIDING IN HOT OR FOREIGN CLIMATES,



Or in the United Kingdom. As a natural product of nature, use ENO'S FRUIT SALT, prepared from Sound Ripe Fruit. You cannot overstate its great value in keeping the BLOOD PURE. Without such a simple precaution the JEOPARDY of life is immensely increased. As a means of keeping the system clear, and thus taking away the groundwork of Malarious Diseases and all Liver Complaints, or as a Health-giving, Refreshing, Cooling, and Invigorating Beverage, or as a Gentle Laxative and Tonic in the various forms of Indigestion,

ENO'S FRUIT SALT

is particularly valuable. No TRAVELLER should leave home without a supply, for by its use the most dangerous forms of FEVERS, BLOOD POISONS, &c., are prevented and cured. It is, in truth, a FAMILY MEDICINE CHEST, in the simplest yet most potent form. Instead of being lowering to the system, this preparation is in the highest degree invigorating. Its effect in relieving thirst, giving tone to the system, and aiding digestion, is most striking.

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Depression of Spirits, Sluggish Liver, Vomiting, Sourness of the Stomach, Heartburn, Costiveness and its evils, Impure Blood and Skin Eruptions, &c., ENO'S FRUIT SALT is the simplest and best remedy yet introduced. It removes by a natural means effete matter or poison from the blood, thereby preventing and curing Boils, Carbuncles, Fevers, Feverish Skin, Erysipelas, and all Epidemics; and counteracts any errors of EATING or DRINKING, or any sudden affliction or mental strain, and prevents Diarrhoea. It is a PLEASANT BEVERAGE, which supplies the want of ripe fruit, so essential to the animal economy; and may be taken as an invigorating and cooling draught under any circumstances, from infancy to old age, and may be continued for any length of time, and looked upon as being a simple product of fruit. It is impossible to overstate its value, and on that account no household ought to be without it, for by its use many disastrous results may be entirely prevented. In the Nursery it is beyond praise.

TO EUROPEANS who propose residing in or VISITING HOT CLIMATES, I consider the Fruit Salt to be an indispensable necessary, for by its use the system is relieved of poisonous matter, the result of eating to nearly the same extent, and of too rich food, as they do in a colder country, while so much heat-making food is not required in the warmer climate. By keeping the system clear, the Fruit Salt takes away the groundwork of malarious diseases and all liver complaints, and neutralises poisonous matter.

"43 Somerset-street, Portman-square, W., Sept. 5, 1878.

"Sir,—I feel a pleasure in sending you the following extract from a letter I have received from my son in Singapore:

"Singapore, July 22, 1878.

"I find Eno's Fruit Salt a great comfort, and have already finished a large bottle of it. It is well known out here, and highly appreciated; much more so than any other form of saline. I used it frequently on the voyage."

"Yours faithfully, ROBT. KIRKPATRICK."

How to check Disease at the Onset: USE ENO'S FRUIT SALT!

IMPORTANT TO ALL TRAVELLERS.—"Please send me half a dozen bottles of Eno's Fruit Salt. I have tried Eno's Fruit Salt in America, India, Egypt, and on the Continent, for almost every complaint, fever included, with the most satisfactory results. I can strongly recommend it to all travellers; in fact, I am never without it.—Yours faithfully, AN ANGLO-INDIAN OFFICIAL, June 6, 1878."

ENO versus STIMULANTS.—HOW TO AVOID THE INJURIOUS EFFECTS OF STIMULANTS.—The present system of living—partaking of too rich foods, as pastry, saccharine and fatty substances, alcoholic drinks, and an insufficient amount of exercise—frequently deranges the liver. I would advise all bilious people, unless they are careful to keep the liver acting freely, to exercise great care in the use of alcoholic drinks, avoid sugar, and always dilute largely with water. Experience shows that porter, mild ales, port-wine, dark sherries, sweet champagne, liqueurs, and brandies are all very apt to disagree; while light white wines, and gin or whisky largely diluted with soda-water, will be found the least objectionable. ENO'S FRUIT SALT is peculiarly adapted for any constitutional weakness of the liver; it possesses the power of reparation when digestion has been disturbed or lost, and places the invalid on the right track to health. A world of woes is avoided by those who keep and use ENO'S FRUIT SALT: therefore no family should ever be without it.

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PREPARED BY

J. C. ENO'S Patent, at ENO'S FRUIT SALT WORKS, Hatcham, London, S.E.





'I contrived to raise myself, and to peer through the small diamond panes of the little window.'

See 'The Master of the Golden Horse' p. 56.

LONDON SOCIETY.

The Christmas Number for 1878.

THE MASTER OF THE GOLDEN HOUSE

AND

HIS FIVE GOLD KNOCKERS.

CHAPTER I.

THE MAN OF GOLD.

MR. JOHN BAMPFYLDE was essentially a man of gold. There was no doubt of the matter. He had an abundant knowledge of it, a knowledge equally scientific and satisfactory. He had plenty of it; metaphorically, he rolled in it; he could afford to speak of it as a mere 'drug in the market.' Let me say also that a man knows a good deal who knows all about gold. He must be an observant, reflective, and clever fellow. He must understand nature and human nature, the markets, currency, and exchange. This was the case with our man of gold.

He began in the simple, direct, physical way. He knew all about gold as a metal.

It happened this way.

John Bampfylde came of a good old stock. He was the eldest son, and for many years the only child. His father was one of those yeomen of Devon who have inherited freehold estates which have been in the family for centuries. Some-

times they rise into squires; sometimes they subside into farmers. Bampfylde's father was betwixt and between. When old and foolish he married a Cheltenham lady, who persuaded him to sell his farm, and go and live at Cheltenham on the proceeds. One or two children came of the second marriage; and of course the lady naturally wished to have the ready-money for herself and her children.

At her suggestion young Bampfylde was bound apprentice to a chemist. The chemist to whom he was apprenticed considered that he was as good as any doctor. (Most chemists consider themselves as good as doctors.) In this respect he was wrong. (Most chemists are, in this respect.) He also considered himself a man of science; and here he was quite right. He had a laboratory, and made excellent use of it. He taught Bampfylde a good deal; and the lad picked it all up accurately and quickly.

At his stepmother's suggestion he was induced later to go out to Australia and settle there. The boy passionately loved the woods

and streams and fields of his county; but when the old place was gone for good, he did not take unkindly to this notion of emigrating to Australia, though he went out with a bitter sense of injustice, and a warp was given to his nature.

Young Bampfylde, who at the time of our story had become old Bampfylde, always felt that he had had very hard lines in his youth. The lands had been in his family for hundreds of years. In due course they ought to have come to him. The land had been ill-used by the transfer into the hand of strangers. To the end of his life he always spoke of 'the land' as semi-human, a sentient sensitive creature. Many people do. They would not act unfairly 'by the land' for all the world. They would rather act unfairly by kith and kin than by the land.

John Bampfylde had been well brought up. Devonshire is famous for old, good, and well-endowed schools. An enterprising new head-master had imported a dash of physical science into the scheme of education. Bampfylde was one of the few boys who really cared for it, and got on. Moreover he saw a good deal of the gentry of the neighbourhood. In the kindly society of that pleasant hospitable county of Devon there is no hard-and-fast line of demarcation among the country people. Though Bampfylde's father was only a farmer, his name was a good old name in Devonshire; it was simply known in Cheltenham as that of a retired tradesman, in a semi-genteel street in a new quarter. But the Bampfylde before him was in the commission of the peace; and still higher up, some generations ago, another Bampfylde had been a member of Parliament.

John Bampfylde, having made such good use of his time when apprenticed to the English chemist,

did capitally at Melbourne. He got on very well with his employer, and was soon able to turn chemist on his own account. By and by he received the news of his father's death. This quite diverted his thoughts from England, and he became thoroughly colonial. He took no interest in his stepmother—who had caused him, as he considered, to be treated with injustice—or in any children there might be.

He was at Melbourne when the gold discoveries were made. Shortly before this time he had been engaged to a young woman, and shortly afterwards the young woman, from mercenary motives, jilted him. She was a fool. All young women who jilt men from mercenary motives are fools. There is something so utterly antagonistic to a woman's nature and happiness in such an act that it is necessarily a foolish one. Nearly every person in Melbourne was simply mad on the subject of making a fortune. Bampfylde was one of the exceptions. He stuck by the shop. He told Polly that the shop kept him, and that he should keep to the shop. Polly tried to arouse him to a nobler ambition in the way of getting money, but ignominiously failed. Then there came in her way a lucky dog with a heap of nuggets, who promised her carriages and dresses; and she jilted Bampfylde.

But Bampfylde—how different it would have been if she had only known it!—was beginning to make money fast. A disappointment in love acts differently on different people. Some people are upset by it altogether; they lose their friends and their business. His misfortune made this remarkable man apply himself to business more than ever. Some men immediately fly to get consolation from some other fair one. Bampfylde simply abjured the sex. Some years after-

wards, when he used to see Polly very slatternly, and her children grimy little beasts, he was thankful for his escape. None the less he had been treated very basely, and another warp was given to what had been originally a sound and generous nature.

A great opening came to him with the gold discoveries. The people who found the gold were highly delighted, and at the same time slightly puzzled. Was it really the same gold as other gold,—no touch of inferiority, no measure of alloy? Would they really be able to get in England a weight of shining sovereigns equivalent to the weight of the nuggets? People brought the gold to Bampfylde, the scientific chemist, to examine it. Bampfylde tried his tests—his solid tests and his fluid tests. He was perfectly satisfied with the quality of the gold. He was prepared to buy it to any extent. As a matter of fact, I believe, an Australian sovereign is worth fourpence more than an English sovereign. Bampfylde had saved some money, and as a steady, industrious, business man he was able to command considerable credit. Thus he drove a flourishing trade as a gold merchant, making at first his thirty or forty per cent profit on every sovereign, though of course this rate was not long maintained. Still his profits were enormous; and there were very few finders of nuggets who in reality found so big a one as did he, Bampfylde.

The gold business had entirely outgrown the chemical business. This was disposed of very advantageously, and Mr. Bampfylde then betook himself to the study of investments. He gradually became a financier. He turned himself into a syndicate, or whatever they call it, for furnishing loans to companies and governments; and it is to be wished that all syndicates

understood their business in as legitimate a manner. Then, the old love of knowledge being strong upon him, he visited foreign countries; and the old love of Devonshire reviving, he went back and revisited the fields and woodlands of his youth. By this time he had visited many lands and known many people. He was a great financial authority, a great social fact.

He found all things changed except the sweet eternal aspects of Nature. Still sprang the heather on the moorland, still waved the woods over the streams as of yore; but while he had been wandering in the wilderness of life for forty years, the bygone generation had been swept off the face of the earth. Bampfylde told himself that he was quite entitled to hate his stepmother and any half-brothers and sisters he might have. But there was an unknown fount of tenderness in the man's nature. He went down to Cheltenham. He found Cheltenham changed, Pittville was deserted, the old parish church was discarded for an iron structure, old streets were swept away for new. He examined the registers. The registers in terse inexorable language told him of the birth and death of two children, of his father's death, of his stepmother's death. All the inquiries which he made added very little to these facts. He found that a very large estate, which comprised a good deal of his native village, and extended far away over moor and hill, was to be sold. Here, as usual, he was lucky. It was the time of a miserable commercial crisis. Everybody wanted to sell, and there were not very many to buy. He bought the great Downe estate. He built a wall seven miles long around his park. He found a big house, to which he threw out wings right and left. He built a picture-gallery, and filled it with

good pictures. He dug cellars, and filled them with good wines. Prosperity, travel, intercourse with many lands and many minds, had gradually given him an education and refinement which contrasted strongly with his rough exterior. The dormant love of reading, dormant since the days of his boyhood, revived. That same love of letters is like the wheat buried with mummies: it may be buried for ever so long, but let the vivifying influences come, and it blooms. In his big silent Devonshire home he read and read. The place might be a show-house, only he would not allow it to be shown. Still he was not unsocial. His business relations had necessarily drawn him into connection with many people, and there were seasons in which he filled his house with visitors. Such visitors sometimes said that he was a money-proud man, an ostentatious man. He made a great display of gold. The precious metal glimmered, glanced, and glittered at every turn. His favourite service of plate was of massive gold. The cornices of his rooms were inlaid with gold. His letters were brought to him on a golden salver. In the library, in a glass case edged with gold, was a mass of gold—a famous nugget. There were other rumours about his gold. The very knockers of his door were made of gold. If he gave anything it was always gold. He never had any other metal in his purse than gold, never took or gave change. In his bedroom there was a big chest full of gold pieces.

All this talk came to my knowledge by and by and gradually. There was a mixture of truth and error, but a solid substratum of truth. But his motive was not so mean and poor as is commonly supposed. That lucky *coup* about the Australian gold had made his

fortune; and he felt very grateful to the gold, as he would have been to anybody or anything else that had made his fortune. He loved the gold as he loved the Devonshire landscape, his old home, his old family. The love was not so sordid as it looked. It was love flowing forth to inanimate, because it was denied to human, objects.

Old mother Rothschild always used to sleep in the old dirty house with the iron-nailed door in the *Judenstrasse* at Frankfort, because it was there that all the money was made. It was from a similar feeling that Bampfylde made such a lavish use of it. Wealth is a great thing for a man if he knows how to use it wisely. Wealth means well-being, as Adam Smith tells us; but wealth and well-being don't generally go together in this life. It is one thing to know how to make money, and another thing to know how to spend it. There are many men who think they are worth their half million or million of money. They are worth nothing of the kind. They are only worth the hundreds a year—not very many—which they spend. They are merely the pipes which pass on the precious stream of wealth to the future fertilisers.

Mr. Bampfylde had learned in the early part of his career how to make money. It took him a much longer time and much greater pains to learn how to spend it. But he managed this at last—after a fashion, and not a bad fashion either. But he was a humorist, and also something better than a humorist.

There was one thing on which his mind was particularly set. He wanted an heir. He need not have wanted for one long, for doubtless many people would have been very happy to oblige him. Who would not consent to be adopted by a millionaire? But old Bampfylde

CHAPTER II.

SHOWING THAT A MAN NEVER
LOSES BY POLITENESS.

had a fad on the subject. He wanted to maintain the old name and the old race. He had a great idea that his money should go to the family. But he found that he had no family to which the money should go. There are many poor people who are absolutely burdened with families—ancestors, descendants, collaterals—to any extent. Bampfylde often mused over the fate of his big possessions. Suppose he made no will at all, and let the law dispose of his property for him; he supposed the law of the land would not make such a bad disposition of his effects. Suppose he made a will, and left it all to her most gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, as another man had once done. That would not be at all bad. Suppose he spent it all upon himself. But how? The thing was impossible. If he ate and drank more than he did, he would get the gout, and do for himself. If he spent his money as fast as possible on books, pictures, horses, buildings, wines, all this would prove an accumulation of property, which would be struggled for and scattered by and by. Surely somewhere there must still be a head for the famous old family of Bampfylde. Surely there must somewhere be an heir-at-law, or what was the good of the law? He had a great idea of resuscitating the old family, of discovering the direct lineage and its present representative. Why should there be a great fight over his property after he was dead, and the property itself be dissipated among the lawyers? It was a question which would be best settled in his own lifetime. He would feel all the better if he could find a proper legal heir; better still if he could make that heir a friend, and a support to his declining years.

The way in which I came to know old Bampfylde was as follows.

I, CHARLES JAMES STUART, of Christ Church, Oxford, had been down staying in the West of England, in Cornwall and North Devon. I know of no country to equal it except the Lake Country, and even on that point I am doubtful. I was a bit of a sportsman, and fond of the shore-shooting which has come of late years into fashion. I have made great bags that way—wild-ducks and wild-swan, teal and widgeon, plovers and oyster-catchers. Then I had made friends with the fishermen; and though the nights were very cold I had gone out with them to their grounds for pilchard and mackerel. And when one was tired of the fiord-like rivers, of the battlemented rocks, of the wooded valleys, and thought that a word or two might be said in favour of the haunts of civilisation, where would you find pleasanter quarters than the Three Towns, especially if you belong to the Royal Yacht Club on the Hoe, overlooking the Sound, which I am bound to say is the noblest-placed club in England?

But the days were darkening towards Christmas. I had only had ten days' vacation, a week in the country and two days in town. But it is astonishing how much you can pack into a week if you only try. I had tried and I had succeeded. And now I was going back to town.

My heavy luggage was at the station. I had only a hand-bag to carry, and I proceeded along a main thoroughfare. It is odd to watch the alterations of a thoroughfare. This particular street was wide, silent, empty. I was about to cross it, and suddenly the dead street appeared all alive. Carriages

dashed one way and carriages dashed the other way; a big omnibus came along; there were also carts and horsemen. The multiplying sounds of wheels had attracted my notice, and I had not moved off the pavement. It fared differently with a pedestrian who was a few yards in advance. He was walking very lamely, leaning on a big stick. He appeared confused by the sudden rush of vehicles, and drew back. His foot came rather violently against the kerbstone; the omnibus came perilously near, and the driver, being in fault, of course anathematised him freely. I caught a sudden glance at the old gentleman: a great scarlet blotch on his face, keen eyes, somewhat forbidding features; he was by no means the kind of man with whom one would feel inclined to fraternise from *à priori* considerations. But I had imbibed with my mother's milk the kindly doctrine that we ought to do all the good we can, in all the ways we can, to all the people we can. As an imperfect disciple of this creed, I caught the old gentleman, and prevented him from falling; and then, observing that he was both lame and disconcerted, I said,

'Will you allow me, sir, to offer you my arm across the road?'

He took my arm, and I piloted him across the now busy street. He did not relinquish it when we reached the other side, and we thus walked together to the station. Here I had fortunately the opportunity of showing him a little further attention.

He clapped his hand to his side and cried out,

'O dear, O dear, I have lost my valise!'

'Where did you leave it?'

'At the Royal, either in my room or in the coffee-room.'

'Let me get it for you. What is your name?'

The old gentleman gave a scrutinising look.

'My name is Bampfylde. But I will not trouble you. I must not mind losing the train.'

'But we need not lose the train at all. I can get your bag quicker than you can do so yourself. Just wait for me a few minutes.'

It was not far to the Royal; the readers who know Plymouth will remember this. I had been staying at the Royal myself, and so there was no scruple in handing me over the valise that was hanging up in the coffee-room, albeit it chinked heavily, and the chink was that of gold.

I handed the bag to Mr. Bampfylde, whose features broke into a smile of gratification, and who made a clutch at it.

'We had better travel together,' he said; and we stepped into a first-class carriage.

I had only a second-class ticket, but I followed him.

Presently we had to show tickets. I was booked to Exeter, and there was something extra to pay.

'O, really,' said Mr. Bampfylde, 'you came in here because I asked you; you must let me pay the difference.'

'Not at all,' I answered. 'I do not in the least care what class I travel by; and,' I added, with a touch of the old Etonian politeness, 'it is quite worth while to give a little extra for the sake of a pleasant companion.'

Old Bampfylde gave an appreciative grin at the idea of being taken for a pleasant companion.

But we were alone in the railway-carriage and managed to talk pleasantly. In those days I liked talking for talking's sake; I am now coming over to the opinion that silence is golden. The old gentleman seemed to like my garrulity, and even became garrulous himself.

'You like Devonshire?'

'I should rather think I did.'

'What is it that you particularly like?'

'I like everything—the moors, the streams, the woods, the combes, the rocks, and bays.'

'I am a Devonshire man.'

'Glad to hear it. I am happy to express my appreciation of Devonshire to a native.'

'You have been sporting?' he said, with a look at some of my paraphernalia.

'In a sort of way, but chiefly shore-shooting and rock-fishing. I have not been in the way of getting trout or pheasants. I have got some casual snipe and woodcock though. But I have no friends among the preserves.'

'That is a pity. I have rights on a river where you get both trout and salmon.'

'Capital!'

'And I have some preserves. I never shoot, but I am told that my covers have plenty of pheasants and partridges.'

'I should like to let fly at them.'

'So you shall with pleasure. Come and see me; I will put you up for a night or two. You shall shoot and fish as much as you choose.'

'That is too good an offer to be refused. One of these days I shall hope to take advantage of it.'

'When will you come?'

'Ah, that is what I cannot tell. I have to be for a time in London, after that I must be at Oxford.'

'You are an Oxford man, I suppose?'

'Yes, and Oxford will be my headquarters for some time to come.'

We came to a junction, a junction of the Mugby kind, where every line met, and every line seemed to have the red danger light on it.

Mr. Bampfylde and I had to

wait for half an hour in the refreshment-room. He took some hot negus to keep out the cold, and I followed suit with something stronger. At last I was told that my train would start in five minutes. The unfortunate Mr. Bampfylde would be stranded at the station for an indefinite period. I could not carry politeness further than I had done already, and must be off. But before I left he said to me somewhat earnestly,

'You do not happen to have any relations of my name, do you?'

'No. All I know of any name beginning with Bamp is the Bampton Lectures at Oxford.'

'You never had any relations of that name in this country?'

'Certainly, I never had.'

'Coming down from the fourteenth century.' This in a tone that bespoke pride in the antiquity of his family.

'Certainly not. I can answer that question quite clearly. My family came from Germany some three hundred years ago. It had no such British antiquity to boast of. We settled down in the north-east of England.'

'Ah, that settles it,' he said. 'The surface of society is so small, and England is such a little country, that more persons are related than might be supposed. But I shall hope to see you again.'

A man never loses by politeness, especially by showing politeness to a man who has shootings of his own. But it was a long time before I saw Mr. Bampfylde again, and circumstances happened which quite put him out of my head.

CHAPTER III.

THE THREE GLORIOUS DAYS OF JULY.

THERE are people who talk of the three glorious days of July. I

have had my three glorious days of July, the three first days of my acquaintance with Eleanor.

Assuredly what divines tell us is true. We know not what a day may bring forth.

One first of July, about five o'clock in the afternoon, I fell in love with Eleanor.

I do not know whether divines and philosophers would take cognisance of such a fact; if not, so much the worse for them. Scientific people don't care for emotions. They want facts. Now my falling in love was as much a fact as anything else could possibly be; a spiritual fact worth any number of material facts.

I had gone out of town from Saturday to Monday to stay with some great folks, friends of my guardian, now happily released from all responsibility. They were rich titled people, and I think my *quondam* guardian thought that he was doing me a good turn in introducing me to people of family and fortune where there were nice girls. But the notion of marrying for money never presented itself to my mind. Nevertheless I had a very pleasant time of it. The ladies were going on to pay a visit to another great house, and I volunteered to row them up the river for a certain distance to a point where the carriage would meet them. This I had done, and feeling somewhat tired I had rowed the boat into a little shadowed creek, where I lay down, with a Greek author in hand to read, and so fell asleep.

It was a warm afternoon, the heat being somewhat tempered by the evening breeze, which had sprung up and modified the strength of the sun. 'Sleep, my son; sleep in the sun is good,' wrote the Greek tragedian, whose play—for examination purposes—I had been reading. My sleep

must have been deep, for when I woke up I had lost all remembrance of time, place, and circumstances. But presently voices come to me, and though I had no right to listen, yet in my semi-conscious state I could hardly help hearing.

The voice was literally music over the water. I am morbidly sensitive to the power of the human voice. I am a near-sighted man; ride, eat, and even sleep with my eyeglass. And Nature, which has dulled one sense, has made me unusually acute with another, peculiarly sensitive to all sounds, and especially to all variations of the human voice. This voice, in its clearness and sweetness of intonation, went straight to my heart.

'I think that sketch will do, mother.'

'Yes, dearest; it is very pretty.'

'I wonder if I should be able to sell it.'

'I almost think you would, Nellie. You have taken great pains, and improved very much.'

'Do you know, mother, I rather wish that we were rich people?'

'It is of no use wishing, dearest. We must make up our minds to be quite poor people, perhaps struggling people.'

'I hope it is not wrong to wish we were better off; at least that we were as well off as when poor father was living.'

'I am not sure that it is not wrong, dearest. I have heard it said that there is nothing so sweet as an accepted sorrow. That is to say, that when we find ourselves in a trying position, to make sure that it is for some wise good purpose, and to do our best in it. Then things often come right in a wonderful way. How could I bear things as they are, darling, unless I had such a belief?'

I thought I distinguished a sound, as of the rustling and ming-

ling of delicate raiment, a meeting of matron and maiden kisses, and a little sob.

Then the clear young voice broke forth again.

'How exquisite are these water-lilies, mother! I think I must put them in a corner of my sketch.'

I should have left the shelter of my creek, only there was a silence, during which I judged that the sketching was going on.

'Your poor father told me once that he dreamt an angel stood by him and said, "Consider the lilies." He felt sure that there were flowers in heaven.'

"Pure lilies of eternal peace," murmured the girl.

I recognised the line from one of my favourite poems.

I now took up the oars and prepared to push off from shore. As I was doing so, the young lady said, in quite an altered voice (it was wonderful how she went from *penseroso* to *allegro*),

'I wonder if that advertisement will ever come to any good.'

'It was a very curious advertisement, my dear.'

'I have a great impression, mother, with a merry laugh, 'that this will make our fortunes yet. I am sure I often heard papa say that he came from this family.'

'I fancy so, too, my dear. But I was so stupid that I never cared for any relations beyond those whom I have known and loved.'

At this point I shot out swiftly from the bank. Apparently my movement had somewhat startled the ladies; for as my boat cleared the corner, they too approached the angle of the shore. I obtained a full view of them both, although I must confess that I concentrated my attention for the short time that was allowed me on the younger lady. She was a noble-looking girl, tall, lithe, and graceful. Talk of 'angels bright and fair,' it was

a phrase invented for her; she was bright and fair as an angel.

It was a case. I was in for it at once. Love at first sight. I had dropped at Cupid's first shot. I had heard of such things, and had classed them as old wives' fables. I had heard of the alleged phenomenon and had disbelieved it, and now I was confronted with it. It was, as philosophers say, an ultimate fact.

I made guarded inquiries respecting them. I could only make out that it was a lady and her daughters, the name being Eger-ton. They lived in a pretty cottage, in what was doubtless a cheap lodging, but, covered with roses and honeysuckle, it appeared to me to be a paradise. I understood that they were about to leave immediately.

I made my way to the railway station, the midsummer sky being all aglow with a divine radiance, tender and prophetic with a happy meaning. The fogs and smoke of London seemed translated into a divine ether. 'My heart was as a prophet to my heart,' and told me that we should meet again.

For some time past I had been residing in London, having availed myself of a grace; for I really found that I must do some work. Oxford was a very jolly place, but then its jollity was disturbed by those beastly periodical examinations which mar the happiness of the place. I never had the least chance of doing any good at Oxford. I was a public-school man, belonging to a popular set. I believe nearly five hundred fellows called on me. There was so much feeding besides, that all this ran away with my time, and left little opportunity for reading. Then I had to give return parties, which ran away with my money. I bemoaned my perplexities with a friend.

'Tell you what, old man, I'll put you up to a good thing; you must leave Oxford. Oxford is not a place to study in. It is a very nice place, but not a place for a student. Get leave to stay away for a term, and come up to London.'

'I should think that would be worse.'

'Not at all. It would be a good deal better in every way; get a reading-order at the British Museum. Lots of fellows have worked there, and got no end of good. There's Jones, who's got an Indian Civil Service, entirely through the Reading-room; and I know two or three fellows who have bagged a first-class out of it. You see you have every book you want close at hand, and bitter beer is not allowed there; and fellows can't propose cards, or even chaff you there.'

I at once saw the obvious advantages of such an arrangement.

'And your tics can't come and dun you either.'

This was better and better. I was already beginning to experience what philosophers call 'a dissipation of energy,' consequent on those same tics.

'I'll take your advice; I'll ask the Master of my college to give me a recommendation.'

'The Master of the college! Fiddle-de-dee! He's no good; you must get a London householder. The householder swamps everything in the British Constitution just now. I'll ask my tobacconist in Bloomsbury. He'll do the trick for you.'

Those were happy days which I spent at the great Reading-room; I came quite to love the place. In the violent flush of virtuous effort I set it before me as a great moral object to be there at the opening of the gates at nine o'clock. Sometimes I stopped till the bell of the Reading-room announced the hour

of closing. There were great annoyances. I lost my ticket once or twice, and received an official slanging before it was renewed. Then I had to show my ticket every day before entering. The Reading-room attendants knew my face perfectly well, but still I had to show it—in consequence, I was told, of some miscreant who had stolen or ill-used some books, the said miscreant being supposed to have stolen the ticket of some legitimate reader. I wonder if he had picked up the ticket which I had lost.

I should not at all mind the trouble if it answered any good purpose. But the plan is utterly nugatory. The obvious plan would be that the doorkeepers should admit those whom they knew perfectly well, but that in the case of a stranger they should examine the tickets. They might then find that miscreant who has possession of a ticket which belongs to somebody else. *Tableau*. But when once a ticket is produced, which might easily be forged, the official mind is satisfied.

Here is the working of the system:

Enter a learned and illustrious archbishop. He has seized a few leisure moments in order to verify a passage in German theology. We all know the archbishop, if only by his gaiters and hat. But he has not brought his ticket, and is firmly and respectfully refused admittance. He returns to his carriage, not having time to waste on the form of obtaining a special admission.

Enter your humble servant. The attendants know me, and not being proud, do not repulse my attempt at a little conversation; but I am nevertheless sent to the secretary's office, where I consume a certain amount of Government paper and time, and then the door-

keepers are assured, which they knew perfectly well before, that I am a reader.

Enter miscreant, who blandly holds up a ticket, and walks rapidly into the room and selects a book. Being greatly pleased with it, and thinking that it has a tendency to improve his mind, he takes out his penknife and cuts away the part which he admires.

It is a very fine example how not to do it in a public office.

One morning I came to the Museum later than usual, and found that most of the seats at my row were occupied. I could hardly believe my eyes. I was sitting at C 16, and there at C 15—O blessed letter, O blessed numeral!—was the bright fair lady.

One would have thought that those light fairy fingers would be occupied with tiny duodecimo, with books whose colour, binding, illustrations, would constitute them works of art. In strange contrast with the slight girlish form and the sapphire eyes was an immense mass of huge folios. My own few books on logic—Mill, Mansel, and the rest—were quite diminutive in comparison. I saw at a glance that hers were works on county history, archæology, biography, and the like. She did not seem very much accustomed to this heavy sort of literary work; still she persevered very nobly, and as the morning wore away to the afternoon, and the afternoon to its close, she appeared to be able to report progress.

O, how my heart rebelled against the etiquette and usages of society! Here was the maiden whom I loved sitting on the very next chair to my own, and yet she was as much separated from me as if mountains rose and oceans rolled between us.

But my chance came, the happy chance which always comes to those who have sense to wait for

and wit to use it. The little bell sounded its warning, and there were all those big books to be moved.

Now the day before I had wanted some help in taking back some big books. But an attendant, who was busy in discussing a murder case with another attendant, politely but firmly informed me that attendants never took books back, and resumed his interrupted conversation.

'I am afraid you will find those books very heavy. The attendants do not take books back. Will you allow me to carry them for you?'

She looked a little distressed at the prospect of an unusual weight, and glanced wistfully at the unoccupied attendants. But no sign of help was given.

So I took up the books and carried them for her. The pleasant labour was light indeed. Heavy books they were, though—cartularies, county histories, genealogies. She herself gathered up the tickets, and I did not catch her name. But I had no need. In that lovely fishing village on the Thames I had heard the name of Egerton, and had learned to love it. So when she gave me a demure little bow of dismissal, I could not resist saying,

'I am very glad if I have been of any use to you, Miss Egerton.'

She looked a little conscious, a little frightened, but did not vouchsafe me a single word. In the hall I saw her again quite by accident. Her mother met her. I recognised the mother at once; she might have been recognised by the likeness to her daughter.

'O, you precious mum!' I heard her say; and then again, 'I think I see a little daylight.'

There was a private carriage at the foot of the steps. They entered and drove rapidly away.

'I shall see her again,' I murmured to myself. 'I shall see her to-morrow.'

I need hardly say that next morning I was at the British Museum as soon as the gates were unclosed, and I remained till the gates were closed again. But during that whole day I saw nothing of Nellie Egerton.

That evening I had to go out to a party. Student and recluse as I chose to consider myself, I went out to a great many parties during the London season. I noticed that I always worked much better in the day if the party had been a pleasant one. I know fellows who will go away from parties and hang about bars, where attendant sirens administer restoratives. I don't pretend to understand such bad taste. It must be owing to the defects of early training. Let young people have plenty of good society in early life, and they will not care for society that is indifferent.

That very evening I went to a great crush party. I went late. When the Museum was shut, I went off to dine at a club with some friends. After dinner there was the Opera; after the Opera I had invitations for two parties—one was a 'small and early,' but showed every sign that it would be large and late. I had a feeling of wonderment whether I should meet Miss Egerton there. Then I went to my other party, and arrived about midnight.

My name was proclaimed, and I exchanged salutations with my hostess. There was a long suite of rooms thrown open. In one of them there was skilful playing on the piano, and a superb voice was rising. I knew that voice at once. It was none other than Eleanor Egerton's.

She was listened to with rapt

attention. I had hardly heard a finer voice at the Opera which I had so lately left. I made my way towards her, but there was a great cluster of people round her, and I felt very shy, as I had not been formally introduced. But I saw her, and I thought she looked a little surprised and not displeased. Then I went back to my hostess. I knew her so slightly that I was surprised at her kindness in sending me a card of introduction. But I managed to ask her, with an air of ignorance, who the young lady was who sang so admirably.

'O, that is Miss Egerton! Her father was rector of a parish in the division of the county which my husband represents in Parliament. Poor girl, I believe this is the first party which she has been at since she lost him. But you should see her drawings, Mr. Stuart. She draws as exquisitely as she sings.'

I managed to find my way into the refreshment-room, and hovered around her in her train. Then gathering courage, possibly from the foaming grape of eastern France, I spoke. She greeted me at once heartily and kindly as the unknown friend who had helped her at the Museum. During the chances of the evening I found myself in the conservatory, and, as our hostess was not at hand, I succeeded in introducing myself by name.

CHAPTER IV.

FIVE GOLDEN KNOCKERS.

IN course of time I did manage to find myself in Devonshire again. I know people who go there season after season, year after year, for the best part of their lives. 'I have been there, and still would go,' is a phrase which exactly suits Devonshire. No one who has ever known that loveliest of counties, but has sighed that he might have

a summer home of his own in some shaded glen or amid the glories of its northern or southern sea. In the course of my travels I came to Plymouth. A friend had put me down for seven days at the Royal Western Yacht Club.

Suddenly I bethought myself of old Bampfylde. I should like to thin his streams and wend my way across his stubbles. I had fairly forgotten him, and I must suppose that, by parity of reasoning, he had equally forgotten me. Nevertheless I wrote my note, amid a crowd of other notes, at the club, and the thing went clean out of mind. However, by return of post, I got an answer in a big sprawling hand, which spread itself diagonally across the page, in which the writer, Mr. Bampfylde, assured me that he had not forgotten me, and would be very glad if I would give him a week of my company.

Instead of going to his station, as I ought to have done, and where he had sent his trap to meet me, I got out at the hideous junction, where I at least knew that I could hire a conveyance that would take me to Downe.

'Do you know Downe?' I asked a cabman.

'Downe Hall? Squire Bampfylde's? I should think I do. He's down there just now expecting company.'

'What sort of a man is he?'

'He's a very queer one, is that Squire Bampfylde. He's got a big park, and drives all round it every day with eight horses with golden-plated harness. He's mortal shy of letting people come near him. One day I drove a gent, as might be you, down here, who wanted to see the park. The lodge-keeper wouldn't let him in; but he found an easy place in the wall, and got over. He had only got over a few minutes when he meets the governor, who makes him a low bow,

and asks him what he wanted. He says he comes to see the place, and how the lodge-keeper wouldn't let him in; but he thought Squire Bampfylde wouldn't mind his looking at it. "Jem," says the Squire, "here's a couple of sovereigns for you, and I'll take care of the gentleman." So he has the gentleman in, and drives him about, and gives him dinner; and then, when it's quite dark, and the roads miry and the rain falling, he leads him to the steps outside the house, says, "You came here as you chose, and you can get back as you choose;" and slams the door in his face. It was about three in the morning when that gent got back to our place, and he was horribly torn and muddy. He nearly broke his neck getting over the wall again, and had seven country miles to walk. After that the Squire raised his wall three feet all round, and stuck spikes and broken glass on the top of it.'

This kind of talk was not very likely to assure me of the character of my reception. But it is not necessary to believe all that cabmen say. Mr. Bampfylde received me with the greatest cordiality.

'I am so glad that you remembered me, and took me at my word, and came to see me.'

'Well, I confess I was a little shy in writing to you after the lapse of so long a time.'

'O, that's all nonsense. Of course I should not have asked you unless I meant you to come at any time which would be most convenient to yourself. I am so glad that you took me at my word. It shows that you have faith in me; and faith is a fine thing.'

Despite the scarlet blotch and the coarse features, there was something eminently kind and courteous in his tone. My heart warmed to his voice, which is the highest thing I can say of a man. There was

something very simple and unsophisticated in my manner, albeit the new scene in which I found myself was one of great and unusual splendour.

There seemed to be a pervading glitter of gold everywhere, not tinsel and veneering, but substantial gold, except where there were gems, statuary, and pictures, which even my uncritical sense told me were of more value than mere gold could possess.

'I am all alone to-night, except, indeed, that there is one visitor who may or may not return this evening;' and here I thought a shade of annoyance passed over his face. 'But let me show you your room.'

It was a large low house, in fact only two stories high, but it covered a considerable extent of ground. Outside the hall, and communicating by a public way, was a pretty chapel. The hall was large, and on ascending the stairs I found that several sets of stairs converged there on a wide open space as large as the hall below. A magnificent window of painted glass rose from basement to roof. Opposite this window there was a kind of corridor, five bedroom doors with resplendent panels, and each decorated with a golden knocker.

'Well,' he said, 'here are my five guest-chambers. Here is my young lady's chamber. I expect a very pretty girl here in a day or two, Master Stuart; so I advise you to try and keep heart-whole. Poor girl, there's not the least use in her coming. I suppose, however, that she must come if she wants.'

It was an exceedingly pretty room—perfectly lovely, as the more appropriate description would be. White and gold were the main characteristics. Mr. Bampfylde had probably seen some of the bridal apartments, which are fitted up

most gorgeously, in many of the American hotels. Only those who have been at Saratoga can imagine such a very pretty room. The private bedrooms at Windsor Castle are nothing to them. Here was golden knocker No. 1. The room would have aroused all Victor Hugo's enthusiasm respecting a vestal chamber, as in *Les Misérables*. It argued a delicacy of tone and taste about the old man for which I had hardly given him credit. Golden knocker No. 2 was a very different kind of room. It was more a study than a bedroom. Along three sides of a room ran bookcases amply filled with well-chosen works. There were some good pictures on the walls. There were a sofa and two easy-chairs, one on each side of the fireplace. There were three tables in this room. One was placed before a window, which was filled with flowers, so as to catch the full light and air. Then there was a movable table running on wheels, which might anywhere follow the caprices of the owner of the room, which was designed as much for a living-room as a sleeping-room.

'This belongs to my friend Blogram. Comes when he likes, and goes when he likes, and never tells me either when he is coming or going; orders what he likes for dinner, and dines here in case he is not dressed when the dinner-bell rings. Then Blogram will keep to his room, reading, writing, and thinking, for days together. If he's thinking very hard, he won't get up at all. If the weather's very fine, he will wander about the country till the last thing at night, or perhaps he will not return at all.'

'Who is Blogram?'

'Blogram's a great man, a very great man. He is a philosopher. Been all over the world. Is always going all over the world. May be in Kamskatka, for all I know,

at the present moment. He is the best possible invention for me. Look here, young man: are you going to study while you are here?

'Not if I know it,' I answered, in the vernacular of the period. 'Not for Joseph.' My mind, or what stood duty for my mind, was entirely absorbed in hunting and fishing just now.

'Because if you were, Blogram's room would be just the place to suit you, if you were going to read. Better not, perhaps, as Blogram might cut up rough if he were to come suddenly and find his room occupied. Here is No. 3 gold knocker.'

This room was a plain comfortable bedchamber. A good tub, small swinging bookcase, a business-like table with writing-materials.

'This is our ordinary guest-room. I put it at the use of any good fellow who likes to live in the living-rooms and to go out into the open air, and at the same time likes to write a letter or two, night or morning, or to carry off up-stairs a good book from the library. You have heard of the man who chose a wife by the way in which she took cheese. I think I could tell you a man's character by the way in which he uses his bedroom.'

'Always excepting Blogram.'

'Of course. Blogram is an exception to every rule. I only wish he would turn up, for I am very much bothered and worried just now.'

'Sorry for that, my kind friend. Can I help you?'

'I will tell you about that by and by.'

Room No. 4 with a golden knocker was a very similar room.

'You will perceive, Mr. Stuart, that I try to have a sort of social salad from my five golden guest-rooms. I have my beauty; then my wit or my philosopher, as the case

may be; then my sportsman, like yourself; then my familiar friend; and here is one more room which you ought to see.'

This last room formed a remarkable contrast to the others. Here the gold was simply ungovernable. It raged and flaunted everywhere. The room was in thorough Parisian style. It was full of nicknacks and ornamentation, and one could hardly move about comfortably. The place was gaudy; the pictures meretricious. The china was ill-assorted.

'You don't think much of this room?'

'No; I can't say I care for it.'

'These are lavish purchases which I made at a time when I had more money than wits. I call them "my failures," the silly bargains I made while I was teaching myself something better. Between ourselves, I may tell you that I call it "the Fool's Room."'

'I hope you are not going to put me into it.'

'No, indeed, I assure you—at least, not at present, and I hope you will never deserve it. I shall put you into an ordinary room. If you want to read, you can make yourself comfortable in the library. By the way, I have ordered some supper there to-night. We shall be all there by ourselves, unless Mr. Seymour Simpson turns up. I hope not,' he added, *sotto voce*.

CHAPTER V.

WANTED, AN HEIR.

WE had our supper. It was a regular French *petit souper*, which looked rather odd in the wilds of Devonshire; but he told me that he always carried a French cook with him.

After supper he rose, and very carefully removed from a *secrétaire* a back number of the *Times*,

and pointed to an advertisement in the second column :

'If the present direct representative or heir-at-law of the Bampfylde family should apply to Messrs. Abraham & Abraham of Lincoln's-inn-fields it may be much to his advantage. He must be descended from John de Bampfild, to whom a grant of abbey-lands in Devonshire was made by Henry VIII. Any reasonable expenses of likely applicants will be paid.'

'It is rather a curious advertisement,' I said ; 'but I should think one that was likely to attract attention.'

'Attract attention ! I should just think so. I had about a hundred answers.'

'And what sort of letters were there ?'

'Not worth a rap—at least the most of them. A good many of them were regular impositions, attempting to get money under the last clause of the advertisement. If it was clear that they had nothing to stand upon, I simply took no notice of their communication. In one or two cases I directed the lawyers to send a small cheque, and to say that if necessary they would be communicated with further, but that this was unlikely.'

'Do you think that you will ever find the right man ? Those abbey-lands have always been unfortunate. Old Spelman says, you know, that a curse rests upon the possessors of them.'

'O, as for that, the abbey-lands and our family have long parted company—at least I have had to buy them back again. My possessions, such as they are, have been made by trade and investments in these modern days. With me it is simply a question of relations. My lands were no doubt part of abbey-lands originally, but they were never won at a gam-

bling-table, as in Bluff Hal's time, but were paid for with honest Australian gold.'

'And if you can find a legal heir, will you leave him all the money, whether you like him or not ?'

'It's just that which puzzles me so. If I don't like him, he will get no benefit from me—at least in my lifetime. But I should be sorry to disinherit even a man I dislike. I hold that after my time my lands at least ought to go back to my family. I am afraid that the man whom I like least has really got the best claim—that fellow Simpson whom I have had staying here.'

'I suppose you will sift his claim closely ?'

'I should think so indeed. I have already submitted all the case to the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General, and the Attorney-General's devil—a very safe lawyer is that last gentleman. We are getting the very best of advice.'

'It is quite a *cause célèbre*, such as we might find in the Courts.'

'Exactly. I want it to be tried in my lifetime instead of afterwards. I assure you that I have been to the Heralds' College, and they have given me arms and a motto. Then there is a wonderful old fellow who works away at the Rolls for me, who has constructed a regular pedigree and family tree, only we can never be quite sure that we have got all the branches. It appears to me that the further off we go, the clearer the family records are ; it is only when we come to the last few generations that the matters become obscure.'

'I can very well understand that. Nothing has passed into history.'

'Now this fellow Simpson is a lawyer—at least he is a lawyer's clerk ; and for all I know is a duly qualified solicitor himself.'

He has put forward his claim in a duly lawyer-like and ship-shape form. The pedigree which he exhibits is remarkably like that which the Rolls man has made out, and which I will show you to-morrow. Then he has a tomb-stone, a family Bible, and family register, which seem to bring him down in a direct line.'

'I expect that is the stock-in-trade of every claimant.'

'I can't get judicial opinion; but I can get the next best thing—the opinions of those who will be judges by and by. There are some half dozen men who are sure to be Chancellors or Chief Justices, and I will get all their opinions; and Blogram will see all fair, and represent the Home Secretary, or the Court of Appeal, or anything else of the sort.'

'Capital!'

'There was one very nice little girl who wrote to me, and I really think she is some kind of relation. She wrote a very clear pretty account of my forbears, and she traced out her own immediate ancestors for several generations; and then there is a great gap, an utter absence of intermediate links between my family tree and her own people. Now this is what Simpson does. He bridges the gulf, and shows a consecutive range of ancestors. Now I liked this little girl, and I have asked her to come and see me; and though I have said nothing to her about it, I shall give her and her mother twenty pounds for their expenses.'

'And what is their name?'

'Mrs. Egerton and her daughter Eleanor.'

'And I suppose,' I said, repressing my emotion, 'Mr. Simpson is coming in the same way.'

'O, as for Simpson, when I asked him, he bargained for three guineas a day and his expenses. If he hadn't claimed anything,

I should have thought it right to give him much more than that.'

Just as he said this there was a loud ring at the front door, which set the dogs in the hall howling. Presently Mr. Simpson entered. Talk of the —, &c. We all know the proverb.

I looked with some interest on Mr. Simpson, the millionaire *in posse*. Being entirely out of the competition, I was anxious to do so with the utmost fairness. But I confess I did not at all like the man. His face was pale, with a livid look which almost suggested disease, an eye which revealed an expression of envy and suspicion, and there was a general look of vulgar worldliness and meanness about him. He had a voice whose native coarseness had been subdued to an even and subdued intonation, which evidenced great powers of restraint, but which at the same time had lost the freshness and buoyancy which all fair equal conversation ought to have.

He had a little supper by himself, and then came into the billiard-room for a cigarette and some brandy-and-soda. It was a very noble room, which rose to the height of the whole house. There was a fire of roaring logwood, and Mr. Simpson ensconced himself with the air of a man who had spent a fruitful day, and performed a variety of virtuous actions.

'Well, coosin,' he said, 'and how isn't you?'

Here was vulgarity at a glance, I thought to myself; and I observed also that the cousin visibly winced. He was a man who at one time of his life had been environed by vulgar surroundings, but who, having a natural nobility of his own, and taken the best, instead of the worst, which the years had yielded, was, in his way, a great gentlemen, while the other was 'a roaring cad.'

'Such is life,' said Mr. Simpson philosophically, as he poured out the sparkling seltzer into a tall glass with an amber substratum of liquor; 'two hours ago I was a passenger in a third-class carriage. I suppose I am now in the best billiard-room in Devonshire.'

'Do you always travel third class?' I asked. 'In a third class you see a great variety of life and hear a good many opinions. Gladstone often travels third class.'

'All that be blowed!' answered Mr. Simpson. 'I charge the office first class and I travel third class, and I pocket the difference. Isn't that a good way of doing business?'

'Quite legitimate, I should say,' said our host; but still he winced.

'Went to serve a writ on a beggarly parson who lives the other side of Torquay. Nothing like combining business with pleasure. Of course I took a trap, and met the old parson himself, about three miles from the place, on the high-road. I offered the reverend gentleman a lift, and he liked it like beans. When we got comfortably into his parish he begged me to have a cup of tea with him. I had some tea, and then presented him with the writ.'

'I should not like to return hospitality that way,' I observed.

'Don't see the difficulty,' retorted Mr. Simpson. 'I gave him a lift and he gave me a cup of tea. I don't see why these circumstances should hinder the transaction of business.'

'Would you oblige me with the name and address of the clergyman, and the amount of the money involved?' quietly said Mr. Bampfylde.

'Certainly, governor,' said Mr. Simpson, and he gave it from his note-book. 'And we shall get our money too. Those parsons have lots of friends, and at the worst we can sequestrate his living.'

I observed that Mr. Bampfylde wrote the name on an envelope, and before he went up-stairs he was writing in a cheque-book.

'Do you mind changing your room, Mr. Simpson? I find it will be a little more convenient. You shall have a much handsomer room, if you care for that.'

Mr. Simpson modestly disclaimed any pretensions to a handsome apartment.

'Let Mr. Simpson have Golden Knocker No. 5.'

By and by Mr. Simpson took a flat candlestick, and retired to the privacy of his own apartment.

'He's got the Fool's Room,' said Bampfylde, rubbing his hands; 'and he is a fool to talk and act as he does.'

'But, O,' he added, in a lugubrious tone, 'that for the punishment of my sins I should have an heir like that! I should not mind if the fellow only had some touch of a noble ambition about him. If he wanted to get into Parliament, or even wanted to write a book, or be a philanthropist, or only something. But to see a young man without any idea beyond the sordid pelf which I have heaped up being my successor and representative, it is most horrible! Ah, Blogram is a wise fellow! He always told me that I overrated my money, and Blogram is right. It is bringing my gray hairs to the grave with misery.' And the wretched millionaire groped his way miserably to bed.

CHAPTER VI.

THE EVENTS OF THE VISIT.

THE next morning I went out shooting. Simpson went with me. He had about as good an idea of shooting as an intelligent Hottentot, only I should libel the intelligent Hottentot by the comparison.

Nevertheless, I have no doubt that Simpson, in the social circles which he adorned at Islington or any other place he sprang from, made considerable capital of his day's shooting. Bampfylde did not go with us; but he sent three keepers and some sagacious dogs, and he took care that our luncheon left us nothing to regret in our absence from his own hospitable board. He set his face steadily against the *battue*. But again and again we flushed partridges in the stubble and amid the turnip-fields, and there were plenty of pheasants, those lovely Asian birds from the Phasis, in the plantations.

We got back wet, tired, and hungry. A cup of tea and a tubbing set this all right. The man who attended to my wants—I had not brought my own servant, for the best possible reason, that I had no servant to bring—told me that we dined half an hour later than usual, namely, at eight o'clock, and that company had arrived in the house in the course of the day. I was not sorry to hear that the company included ladies. The bachelor freedoms of Liberty Hall might be very well in their way, but I was at that happy age when I could surrender the best of dinners for the society of pretty clever women.

But could anything in the world exceed my delighted astonishment and confusion when I was introduced to Mrs. Egerton and her daughter Eleanor?

Eleanor Egerton saluted me with careless grace and good-humour.

'How remarkable, Mr. Stuart, that we should meet again, after the British Museum and Lady Alice's party, in the wilds of Devonshire!'

'And you have really met before?' said Mr. Bampfylde, highly pleased and amused.

'Indeed we have,' said Eleanor; 'twice.'

'Three times,' I said to myself; for I had never forgotten the conversation to which I had unwittingly listened on the bank of the Thames.

And then we sat down to talk—to talk that indescribable graceful *persiflage* which a clever girl has at her command, but which it would be as impossible to reproduce as the foam of champagne or the echo of laughter.

This might have gone on for twenty minutes, when Mr. Simpson entered the drawing-room, and was duly introduced by Mr. Bampfylde.

What struck me with great interest and surprise was the astonishment and almost the dismay with which Mr. Simpson received his introduction to Miss Eleanor Egerton. The proud careless look of the young beauty contrasted strongly with the mean shrunken expression which Mr. Simpson curiously put on. That livid expression, the expression of envy and suspicion, which had characterised him at the first start, came out unmistakably and offensively. Unless I was quite mistaken, there was astonishment and apprehension caused by her appearance. I satisfied myself of the reality of my impression, and I put it down to a feeling of selfish alarm lest there should be any one else making way in the good graces of Mr. Bampfylde.

I took Eleanor down to dinner, and (happy lot!) I sat next her.

'Mr. Simpson seems to know you?'

'Yes; isn't it odd? It really seems as if he did.'

'Do you know him at all?'

'I am morally certain that I never spoke a word to him in my life. And yet I seem to have seen him somewhere before. I should not wonder if it had been in the

Reading-room at the British Museum.'

By and by, when we returned to the drawing-room, Mr. Bampfylde asked Eleanor if she sang. I anticipated the frank cheerful 'Yes' of her reply; but certainly the old gentleman had never anticipated the brilliant music with which her voice flooded the drawing-room.

Mrs. Malaprop says that in love there is nothing like beginning with a little aversion. Mr. Simpson had indisputably shown aversion on the first evening; but the next day he appeared subdued and evidently smitten. A sudden thought had struck him: that he would swear eternal friendship with Eleanor. The young lady, however, by no means responded to his manifold advances. Besides, I had an earlier claim, and I thought a better title, to Miss Egerton's good graces. In reality it was not at all a bad thing for me that Mr. Simpson, in order to enliven his legal vacation, betook himself to bestowing amorous attentions on Miss Egerton.

In all innocence she came to me for protection from what was very like a silly persecution. And so we took long walks together. The good mater would accompany us for a time; but after she had played the chaperone for about ten minutes her physical energies flagged, and she would dismiss us to the tors and moors with two solemn injunctions: the first, not to get our feet wet; and next, not to be late for luncheon.

I little thought what a tremendous mine that amiable old lady was about to spring on us.

We were sitting one day at lunch, when from the dining-room windows we easily discerned a shortish but powerfully-built man, umbrella in one hand and a light overcoat thrown over his arm, making the nearest cut for the

front door over lawn and flower-beds.

'Well, I declare,' said Mr. Bampfylde, 'if that isn't Blogram *at last*!' repeating the words *at last* with much good-natured severity.

Blogram, without waiting to be announced, quietly entered the room, gave a nod all round, poked out a hand to his host, and sat down to lunch as coolly as if he had just left it for a moment to see after the posting of a letter.

'Where have you come from, Blogram?'

'O, not very far; only from the Great Western Hotel at Paddington.'

'Exactly. But where had you been before you reached Paddington?'

'I have been yachting about the Atlantic.'

'I suppose you went to the States?'

'Yes.'

'Stop there long?'

'No.'

'How long?'

'About half an hour to three-quarters. Went on shore at New York, got some lunch, and came off again. Didn't want any of your beastly towns; wanted the sea-breeze.'

I looked at him carefully. The sea-breeze and the waves had certainly bronzed his face. His hair, originally auburn, was gently silvering. The most remarkable feature about him was the blue-like calm of an eye half closed in dreams, but which would at some time blaze forth with wonderful and piercing light.

It was a peculiarity of Blogram's that he would sit in an armchair in a billiard-room for hours without speaking. At times he appeared to be far away, wrapt up in thought; and at other times he would watch us all so continu-

ously and keenly that some of us felt quite uncomfortable, with a kind of sensation akin to mesmerism.

I could never find out what was the bond of connection between him and our host.

Mr. Bampfylde did not himself know exactly. The bond had grown up gradually and very firmly. Blogram had not borrowed any of his money—had even laughed at his money, and refused to take any. Blogram had turned up again and again in different countries during the era of his travels. He had saved Blogram's life, and Blogram had saved his life. At least so he considered.

But now for the *éclaircissement* about Eleanor.

We were lounging in the conservatory late that same afternoon, the good mother and myself.

'I think I had better just say two or three words to you, Mr. Stuart.'

My colour mounted. My heart bounded. I felt at once that she was going to speak about Eleanor. If I could only make Eleanor's mother my friend! If I could only gain her permission to tell Eleanor all I felt! For I had been reared in an old-fashioned school, according to the exploded tradition of which the father or mother of the maiden ought in the first place to be approached.

'Mr. Stuart, I think you are paying a great deal of attention to my daughter Nellie.'

O, how I blushed and stammered! I should have thought that a University man of my experience would have outgrown all that. But such was not the case. I broke down.

I managed to stammer out that I really did love Eleanor, and I hoped most sincerely that she did not mind it so much.

'O, I don't mind it, Mr. Stuart.

As her mother, I am pleased that you should love and admire my girl. Only I must beg you, Mr. Stuart, not to tell her so. I would not for worlds have her mind disturbed.'

At this I was exceedingly aghast, and began to remonstrate.

'Perhaps, Mr. Stuart, you may have some idea that we are related to this rich man, and that he may leave us his property. But I should tell you at once that there is nothing of the kind. Eleanor has this idea, but she is quite wrong. Mr. Bampfylde has himself told me that he cannot see that we are connections, and he was kind enough to say that he only wished we were.'

'O Mrs. Egerton, I am sure that is about the very last thing of all that I should think of! I had no idea in the world that Eleanor would ever prove an heiress, and I am almost glad to hear that she is not.'

'That is all very well, Mr. Stuart; but boys and girls have good healthy appetites, and cannot live upon air. I do not know whether you are able, or are likely to be able, to maintain a wife?'

I really did not at all like this style of remark. But of course good mothers must look after the temporalities of their daughters.

'Alas, madam, if I am to be as candid as yourself, I cannot honestly say yes. I have nothing. I have less than nothing, because I have a lot of college-debts. If I take a good degree I may do very well. And people tell me that I should have a very good chance at an Indian Civil-Service examination.'

'I think it would break my heart if my girl went out to India. I think, if God gives a mother an only daughter, she was meant to be her love and comfort all her days, not to be expatriated from her.'

'And now I suppose, since I

have told you the truth and how poor I am, you will tell me to go about my business.'

'No, indeed, Mr. Stuart, I will tell you nothing of the kind. You are so young that I expect worldly matters will yet come all right with you. But you are an honest man, and I put honesty and love before all human things. Only stop a time, Mr. Stuart; and by and by you shall come and see us. My poor husband had a very good income but very bad health; and as no insurance company would take his life, we had to save, and we had not saved very much when his last illness came.'

'I see; I understand.'

'And now I must tell you, Mr. Stuart, that Eleanor has another suitor besides yourself.'

'I can very well believe that she has a good many.'

'And this one tells me that he has the brightest financial prospects. He tells me that he has a good and increasing income, and that in all probability he will be Mr. Bampfylde's acknowledged heir.'

'You cannot mean Mr. Simpson.'

'Yes, I mean him, and no one else.'

'He will never make Eleanor happy.'

'I agree with you. I am sure we both like you very much better than we do Mr. Simpson. But then you see this world's goods are all the wrong way.'

'Exactly. 'Tis true, 'tis pity; pity is 'tis true.'

'Just so. But now I will tell you, Mr. Stuart. He came to me because he thought that if he could win me he would have a better chance with my child. He said that if he and Eleanor combined their claims it would settle all difficulty about the nearest succession to Mr. Bampfylde's kinship and estates. When I asked him how

that could be, he coloured up and was confused, self-detected in a mistake. He tried to recall his words; but I always listen carefully, and I was quite certain that there could be no possible mistake. And I have now got my suspicions about Mr. Simpson. He is not a man who, like your imprudent self, would be perfectly ready to marry a dowerless damsel.'

'O, I don't know! Monster as he is, I suppose he has the feelings of human kind about him.'

'But still, here is this difficulty, you see, of his talking about combining his claim with Eleanor's. If our claim is worth nothing at all—and I have no reason to think otherwise—why in the world should he talk of combining it with his own? Now this man knows our case very much better than we know it ourselves, in all probability. I know nothing at all about it myself. My daughter has some vague impression that my poor dear husband had some pedigree papers; but I never took any interest in anything of the sort, and have no recollection.'

This is all of this interesting conversation which is worth recording. It left two effects on my mind and conduct. It checked my impetuous feelings towards Eleanor. We had some wanderings and billiard-playing; but I perhaps saved her from the suspicion that anything warmer lurked beneath the innocent openness and gaiety. Secondly, I began to entertain a feeling of great animosity and suspicion towards Simpson. I glared at his particular golden knocker, and the knocker glared back again towards me.

'And how are you getting on in that wild-goose chase of yours after an heir?' asked Blogram.

'O, very bad, very bad,' groaned poor Bampfylde.

We three were by ourselves in the library. Simpson was with Eleanor and her mamma in the billiard-room, giving the young lady a lesson. I could not monopolise her altogether; and besides, I took a real interest in listening to the talk of these two wonderful old men.

'I suppose our young friend is not in the competition,' and Blogram good-naturedly laid a careless hand on my shoulder.

'No; I only wish he was. All the other way.'

'I suppose that young lawyer is the favourite in the running.'

'He has the most plausible and best sustained claim. How do you like him, Blogram?'

'Don't like him at all. The longer I look at him the less I like him.'

'Then don't look at him. I mean to try and like him myself.'

'But you see I have read faces so long and so often, that they are as an open book. I could tell you pages and pages of that young man's history, because they are to be read in the wrinkles of his forehead, the crow's-feet around his eyes, the lines of that weak and wicked mouth.' Here Blogram fell into one of his dreamy moods. 'The very air is one vast wandering library, where all the syllables that have been uttered are imprinted, and it is scientifically conceivable that every word which we have spoken may be rendered back to us again. Man is a self-registering being. He sums up all his history in his countenance and bearing. Just as you tell the age of trees by their concentric rings, so there is a true art by which we may decipher the moral history of human beings. Trust me that Seymour Simpson is a bad lot.'

'How is he a bad lot?' I asked.

'Not merely negatively; not only by sensuality and selfishness

and an absence of brain development; but depend upon it there are hideous possibilities of crime in that man's nature. He is one of that class of people who go on decorously for years, and then you are suddenly startled by hearing of some crime which they have committed. It may be a sly crime like forgery, or a violent crime like murder. But that fellow has got the possibility of crime in his nature.'

'Pleasant forme!' groaned Bampfylde. 'I may make a will in his favour, and he may poison me next day to get the money.'

'Then don't make a will.'

'I must. I shall go off the hooks before very long, and I am sure my ghost would haunt this place if I had left it without its proper master.'

'Every symptom of incipient insanity,' growled Blogram. 'Better postpone it till Christmas. You will have more cheerful views with the Yule-log and the wassail-cup.'

Bampfylde continued, in a more cheerful tone, 'I only wish that nice girl, Eleanor Egerton, could establish a claim.'

'I feel pretty certain,' said Blogram, 'that the girl is right, and that there is some connection between the names of Egerton and Bampfylde. I have a most miserable memory. It is crowded with the most trivial details, which every wise man would desire to forget. But I remember this much. They were making a railway through a most purely silvan country. But wait a moment, and I will tell you.' Here this curious man closed his eyes, as if going to sleep. 'I am summoning up a picture on my retina,' he said, in an explanatory way. 'Yes, here is a deep cutting, and above it a wood, and a rock comes sharply out from some turf; and on the left, at a mile's distance, is an old gray square-towered church. I

don't remember the name of the place, and perhaps I never heard it. But in an old village inn I sat over the fire with the landlord, and heard the gossip of the neighbourhood, and of an intermarriage between an Egerton and a Bampfylde.' "

" Having said this much, Blogram relapsed into one of his deepest fits of meditation.

'How extraordinary!' I murmured.

'Wonderful man!' said Bampfylde. 'That fellow will set us all right yet.'

This was the last evening of our visit. We were all invited to renew our visit at Christmas, and our respective chambers would be reserved for us. Old Bampfylde gave a whimsical sort of intimation that at Christmas he would really settle his will. He would not say that it would be a lasting will, but it would be a will which might be repealed or modified, or which might permanently stand.

'You will have all your golden-knocker rooms crowded with claimants.'

'Then I will make you one of the family. You shall be as one of the family and in one of my private rooms.'

CHAPTER VII.

OXFORD.

I HAVE now to mention some remarkable circumstances which befell me while endeavouring to unravel this doubtful matter of a pedigree.

I was sitting one day in my Oxford rooms somewhat moodily, when there came a light tap at the inner door, the 'oak' being 'unported.'

I had heard a step moving along the passage—a step unlike any other human step, not that of un-

dergraduate, or scout, or dun, or laundress—and that step had come to my door, and there had ensued a decidedly feminine knocking.

It was Eleanor Egerton.

'Mamma's down just below in the Broad Walk. I persuaded her to let me run up-stairs, and I would bring you down to her. We want to consult you about some very important business.'

'Old Bampfylde's business, I suppose?'

'Just so. Yes.'

'I suppose that, having exhausted the British Museum, you are now going to set to work on the Bodleian?'

'Be quiet, sir. You must not make fun of me. I am sure Mr. Bampfylde was very much pleased with the result of my labours at the British Museum. All the same, you must take us to see the Bodleian. But now come and see mamma.'

The gist of her communication to me was this: Mr. Bampfylde had in the kindest possible way pointed out to her that up to the present time he had quite failed to connect her own family history with the pretty little pedigree which she had worked out at the British Museum; but, at the same time, he quite conceived that such a link might yet be supplied. Nellie had been troubling herself incessantly about completing the missing links, and now she thought that very possibly she had a clue towards doing so.

'Poor papa was very fond of pedigrees. I remember that he had one from old uncle Richard which he annotated himself. If I could only get hold of that pedigree!'

'Where do you think it is?'

'We warehoused a good deal of our furniture; but we sold a large quantity to a furniture-man in our neighbourhood, who, of course, in-

tended to sell again. Now among this furniture there was an old round table full of drawers, and one of these drawers had the pedigree and some old family letters. In our grief and distress at the loss of poor papa, I feel certain that these papers must have been overlooked in the table-drawers. We have made a point of destroying no paper which he ever wrote or in which he took the slightest interest; and as we are sure that we have not destroyed these papers, which we know to exist, I cannot help thinking that we may recover them.'

'It is very unlikely, I am afraid. The broker may have destroyed all loose papers at once, or he may have sold the table.'

That afternoon we had been on the water. We had gone as far as Sandford Lock, and Eleanor herself for a short time had insisted on handling an oar. 'If there is time, dear, I think I should like to go to the service at New College,' said Mrs. Egerton; 'I am so fond of sacred music, and I suppose you have hardly any finer in Oxford.'

How well I remember that afternoon service! It was rapidly growing dusk as we entered the ante-chapel. We made our way to the stalls assigned us. We listened to the intonation of the silvery voice, to the loud glad burst of the exultant anthem. I thought of Thackeray's lines to the good girl going to church, while her lover, the graceless reprobate, hovers about the church-door, 'seeing at heaven's gate angels within it.' She was so still and quiet that for the time I was banished from her presence and knowledge. 'If there is a beauty of holiness,' I thought, 'is there not also a holiness of beauty? Was there not a sanctuary in that hushed and holy heart which harmonised with this noble sanctuary

of man's art and devising? And into that quiet sanctuary how would it be possible for a wretched careless worldling like myself to find the way? I felt that it could only be done by hard work and by striving to be a better man. In my own heart I believed that her mother stood my friend, and that there would come a time when, joyously, naturally, and with Heaven's help and blessing, I should be to that good woman even as a son, and her daughter would be my wife.

But it so happened that at the close of the evensong, when the deep hush was succeeded by noble music, that my eyes unconsciously sought her. The lovely eyes swam in generous tears; the look and attitude reminded me of Wordsworth's nun, 'breathless with adoration.' It was a fine moment of exaltation, wrought by music, colour, and cathedral worship. I was very close to her, and acting on a sudden impulse I stretched out my hand towards her, and her slight kind hand firmly grasped mine.

'And hand to hand is holy palmer's kiss,' said Juliet. It was very little, but it was enough for me that in her truest brightest moment, amid golden lights and solemn music, the little hand was clasped in mine. I asked no more.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE DISCOVERY OF THE PEDIGREES.

I DETERMINED to lose no time, and went at once to the Dean of the college to ask leave of absence for a few days. In our place, if a man wanted to go up to town it was generally to see his dentist or to have his hair cut. But I simply said that I had business, and got up to town at once.

I made my way to the northern suburbs, beyond which was the village of which the late Mr. Egerton had been rector. I quickly found the furniture-dealer, who had a large and good shop, and appeared to be a highly-respectable man. He perfectly well recollected the sale. The table had been sold to a lady in the neighbourhood, who kept a large 'Preparatory School for Young Ladies.' I took the address and went off to call on this lady.

It was a staid old-fashioned house at Highgate. Lofty spiked walls and severe-looking domestics defended the Hesperian gardens in which the young ladies took their pleasure. It was not often that an Oxford man with the extreme University cut made his appearance at those classic doors. I perceived that I was the object of critical remarks to a bevy of tittering beauties. Presently I was ushered into the presence of Miss Sinnock, who of course was always on the look-out for fresh pupils, and must have felt disappointed when she discovered that I did not come about a young lady, but about an old table.

She said that she had the table, and would show it to me; and so I followed her into the drawing-room. We opened the drawers, and certainly they appeared to be empty. At my suggestion, however, they were taken out.

We then perceived that at the bottom of each drawer there was a kind of well of very simple construction, a partition easily removable. Three out of the four drawers yielded no results, but in the fourth there were papers white and blue. The white papers were simply old letters, the business and the loves or hates now buried in oblivion; and the blue paper was simply a half sheet of foolscap, adown which from top to bottom

travelled the tree or stem of the Egerton family, with divers alliances and intermarriages of the Egerton family. I eagerly scanned the documents, and three-quarters down the page my eye lighted on the name of Bampfylde. Without doubt there had been an alliance between the Bampfylde family and the Egertons, of which the Bampfylde might be proud, as the Egertons certainly appeared to me to be the older and more illustrious family. The state of the case appeared to me as follows: I combined with this document the Bampfylde pedigree, so far as it was discoverable from what old Bampfylde had ascertained. A hundred and twenty years ago the Bampfylde stock had dwindled to the spinster side. The last sire had left two daughters. The elder had married a Mr. Egerton. The younger had married a Mr. Simpson. This lady died, and Simpson had married a certain Jane Burton, from whom there was a regular line of descendants. I was perfectly familiar with Simpson's pedigree, which I had repeatedly discussed with Messrs. Bampfylde and Blogram. According to this pedigree, the only daughter of the Bampfylde had married Simpson, and hence the claim of Seymour Simpson. But the astonishing facts were brought out in the Egerton pedigree that the last male Bampfylde had an elder daughter, who was not so much as named in the Simpson tree, and that the lady from whom Simpson claimed had not a drop of Bampfylde blood, being the second wife of the original Simpson, who first married Laura Bampfylde, and died without issue. Mr. Seymour Simpson had wilfully suppressed all the facts about the elder sister, and had so manipulated documents as to make it appear that he was the regular

descendant of an only child. He had probably in the first instance urged what he considered a *bond-fide* claim; but it was as clear as daylight to my mind that in the course of his researches he became fully acquainted with Eleanor Egerton's superior claim, and that this was his governing reason in wanting to marry her. He had not a particle of the Bampfylde blood in his veins.

‘His ancient but ignoble blood
Had crept through scoundrels ever since
the Flood.’

On the margin of the pedigree against the name of Egerton was written ‘of Brettingham.’ I had never heard of Brettingham. I looked at *Bradshaw*, but *Bradshaw* did not give the name. The *Post Office Directory* did, however, and Lewis's *Topographical Dictionary* added further information. Brettingham was in Yorkshire. I thought I would run down and see Brettingham. Obviously the one thing to be achieved was the verification of the pedigree.

CHAPTER IX.

THE JOURNEY TO BRETTINGHAM.

How well I remember that journey down to Brettingham! I had arranged to go down to Cope Station by the Limited Scotch Mail. Without subscribing to the doctrine that the whole secret of success in life is to be a quarter of an hour before time, I find that quarter of an hour is very useful if you are going a long journey. I encumbered myself with all the paraphernalia of a first-class traveller—a lamp which I never lighted, books which I never read, a rug which I didn't want—and I asked for a foot-warmer, which I did not use. Having secured, with the customary selfishness of travellers, the cosiest nook in the compartment,

and scattered my belongings in the way to suggest that half a dozen persons had already secured places in the carriage, I proceeded to promenade the platform. I was a little disconcerted by observing the sinister presence of Mr. Seymour Simpson, who was showing every external sign of also travelling by the night mail. Knowing Mr. Seymour's financial policy of travelling third class and charging first, I had no apprehension of being troubled with his company; still I should certainly prefer not so much as to meet him in a waiting- or refreshment-room. I had always disliked him as a miraculous cad; I considered that I now held proof positive that he was one of those fraudulent scoundrels to whom her Majesty's Government would readily extend the hospitalities of a convict-prison.

I was studying *Bradshaw* and *Murray* in order to ascertain the position of Brettingham. If I had been a Prussian Uhlan I should have been perfectly acquainted with the geography of England; but being only a native it was not to be expected of me. I found that Brettingham was situated about seven miles from the important town of Casterton, and a good many more from the great commercial centre of Coketown. The train stopped at both places, but not at Brettingham-road Station. Before we came to either place we stopped for two minutes at some great refreshment-station. Getting out of the carriage, I observed that Mr. Seymour Simpson was making judicious use of his time in absorbing certain steaming beverages. I took great care not to meet his eye. I felt I could hardly trust my tact and discretion not to relieve my mind, which is a common weakness to those who have no mind to relieve. I felt keenly that he was adding insult

to injury towards Eleanor in first cheating, and then wanting to marry, her.

I do not know whether he recognised me, but I imagine that he did not. Certainly my eye never consciously met his. I never imagined that his destination was the same as my own. I supposed that he was travelling for his firm, to turn either an honest or dishonest penny, as the case might be, with perfect impartiality. Once more the train stopped. It was Casterton. I had not felt certain of the name of the place, and I looked out of the carriage-window to ask a passing porter what station it was. As I did so I observed Mr. Simpson clearing out of a third-class carriage, bag and baggage, with considerable velocity. I myself dismounted much more leisurely, and finding that the solitary omnibus which supplied the public wants of Casterton had driven off, I left my luggage at the parcel-office, saying that I would send the 'boots' of the hotel for it, and I proceeded on foot to the hotel itself.

My original idea had been to take things quite quietly, and to spend my time and money in an easy-going fashion. Casterton was in the immediate neighbourhood of a celebrated district known as 'the Dukeries.' There were parks and palaces in every direction. I promised myself a little tour of inspection while I was in that part of the country. As I approached the only good hotel in the little town, I wondered whether the hateful presence of Mr. Simpson would obtrude itself again. I considered, however, that his economical policy would, in all probability, attach him to the commercials; while of course I should have to go to the coffee-room. As I passed in with some rapidity, in order to elude his observation, I

observed him recruiting at the bar. I ordered supper, and was delighted to find that I could have a sole in addition to the inevitable mutton-chops. As the waiter was laying the cloth the notion came into my head to ask him if he knew Mr. Simpson, and how long he was likely to stay at Casterton.

'Simpson, sir?' said the waiter; 'don't know the gen'man. Haven't got such a name stopping in the house.'

'Haven't you got a tall, cadaverous, ugly, evil-looking customer come in by the last train?'

'I expect, sir, as how the party that you means was in the bar just now, and he asked for any letters in the name of Johnson, and he signed his name Johnson in our book. Shall I bring in the Visitors' Book, sir, for you to sign your own name?'

But I did not care to sign my own name, neither did I care to pursue any further inquiry respecting Simpson *alias* Johnson. The one thing to be avoided was any collision with Simpson.

Now things were befalling me rather oddly this memorable night. In the ordinary course of matters I should have partaken of my simple meal, written a letter or two, read a book or a newspaper, and have gone to roost. Next morning I should have arisen late, made a leisurely breakfast, and have strolled on afoot to Brettingham. But this night a strange wakefulness beset all my faculties. I wondered what on earth should bring Simpson into this region of the earth. I wondered what could induce him to drop his own name and take that of Johnson. Somehow the thought of Brettingham became paramount in my mind. Instead of thinking it a remote matter that could be done at any time, a sort of imperious necessity seemed to drive me off

into the night to visit Brettingham. I tried to subdue this vague feeling and to compose myself for a nap, but it was impossible; at last this vague feeling became so urgent and imperious, that I got up quite fresh on my feet, and rang the bell for the waiter.

'Waiter,' I said, 'I want a carriage for Brettingham.'

'Carriage for Brettingham, sir? Yessir. Leastways, I'll go and ask, sir.'

Presently the waiter returned.

'Very sorry, sir; but the last gent's been and got a carriage for Brettingham.'

'Got a carriage for Brettingham!' I exclaimed, in amazement.

'Yessir. At least, for Brettingham-road Station. The gent said he wanted to catch the down train for the next village.'

Of course it was quite conceivable that railway exigencies might cause him to do so, though it was not easy to understand how. I listened for the inner voice that should prompt my actions—that was an idea which I had picked up from Blogram—and the unabated impulse was still to proceed to Brettingham.

'But surely,' I said, 'you must have more carriages than one. I don't at all mind paying extra.'

'Yessir; but they've all been out to some of the grand places. The horses are tired, and the men gone home. Besides, sir, we like to do things regular. All our work here is day-work, sir, not night-work, except of course a gent like you goes to a party, and gives orders beforehand to be fetched home.'

I found that nothing I could say was likely to have any effect.

I was very vexed that I could not get any horses. People in these days prefer their comforts to their profits. All working people are getting mighty independent; but

although this is often a drawback, on the whole it works well.

I proceeded to the railway station. The down express would get there about one in the morning. The refreshment-room would be open, and there is always a certain amount of bustle and excitement in the five minutes granted for refreshments. Somehow the thought of going to bed never presented itself to my mind that night. Neither did I have any clear notion why I went to the station at all. But this is not an uncommon mental phase. We act half blindly in obedience to some thought which is beginning to stir the mind, to which we have not as yet given definite expression.

I think my idea was, that if I got out at the next station, I might get horses there and return to the village of Brettingham. A wild idea also occurred to me. The train would pass Brettingham. Was it possible in the nature of railway things that the train should stop there?

I took my ticket first class some forty miles away to the next station where the train would stop. I asked the guard whether by signalling the train would stop there, or at any station near there. The guard laughed at my simplicity. The train did not stop till we came to Coketown, forty miles from where I was, five-and-twenty from Brettingham.

'I will give you a sovereign.'

The guard shook his head.

'Two sovereigns.'

The guard shook his head with extra severity.

The door was slammed, the flag waved, the whistle sounded, and the train plunged into the moorland and the darkness.

I sat in my seat restless and excited. I had no more idea than the stoker where I was going to rest my bones that night. I had

left all my traps at the Casterton Station. I opened the window and enjoyed the cold night air.

The moon was shining down in full beauty. Its silvery light flooded all the landscape. The swift streams, the fields and wolds, the village churches, the abodes of men, fledted swiftly by. Then suddenly came a scene which I instinctively recognised from Blogram's description. The clear rock in a deep cutting came sharply out. Then the line bisected the fir plantation. Then, in the moonlight, on the high board I just distinguished the first three letters BRE—

Now, just opposite to me, my eye lighted upon a little glass globe, which was to form, I presumed, by the medium of electricity a mode of communication with the guard of the train. At this time everybody was on the alert about railway outrages. A solitary lady would not enter a railway carriage if there were only a gentleman; and a gentleman, if wise, would not enter a carriage with a solitary lady. Ladies even carried revolvers in their pockets, 'to protect themselves from insult,' with every chance of sitting down upon a drawn trigger and causing a general explosion.

I read a notice that in case of a great emergency one had to break the glass and press a knob. The curt intimation was added, that if the bell was sounded without adequate excuse a penalty of five pounds would be incurred.

I instinctively felt that I must ring that bell and stop the train.

But was I so certain that the train would really stop?

The distant image presented itself to my mind of an intrepid guard moving along the footrail till he entered my carriage, even while the train was in full motion; of that guard entering the carriage, and deciding then and there that my

smashing the glass was frivolous and vexatious; of his sitting by my side and holding me as a prisoner, and then bearing heavy witness against me that I had sought to bribe him; and of a Rhadamanthine magistrate committing me to prison under these aggravating circumstances without the option of paying a fine. But I was fully prepared, for Eleanor's sake, to run the risk of all this. With the knob of my stick I smashed the glass, and to my infinite dismay set a whole lot of bells ringing, this being the particular device employed on this railway.

I felt in a considerable quandary. Would the guard come along the footboard while the train was in motion, or would the train stop? To my infinite relief I found that the motion of the carriages was perceptibly slackening.

I did not wish to cheat the company out of their time or their money; but I felt that time at this juncture was more important to me than it could be to them. I flung my ticket and also my address card on a cushion, having pencilled on it 'All right.' Then I opened the door of the carriage with a key which I always carried with me, and jumped out of the train.

I noticed that there were one or two faces at the windows, as I scrambled down, of people who always will look out of window when a train stops. I had fully taken in the geography of the spot. Above the steep cutting was a wood, and climbing this cutting I found a much more arduous and troublesome business than I had expected. But I breathlessly climbed it where it lay in shadow, and plunged into a wood, and seeing a small hollow, lay quite still. There was a little delay, which I fancied was spent in deliberating whether some one should follow me; but presently,

to my great relief, the train moved on, and there were no accusing foot-steps.

It is at all times easier, both literally and metaphorically, to get into a wood than to get out of it. I blundered about my wood for a little time, until I blundered to the edge of my friendly cutting again.

I walked along until I saw in the moonlit distance the low square tower of Brettingham church. I knew that I should have to pass through the village before I came to the church. I do not profess to be able to explain, but my impression and resolve were that I was to go to the church. The village struck me as pretty, old-fashioned, and picturesque. The moonlight was so clear that I took the day's paper out of my pocket, and was able to read a few lines distinctly. I struck a vesuvian and lighted a cigar, one of my favourite Partagas. I recollect distinctly what a loud echo I aroused as I stole through the vacant village street. I passed the little inn. The thought struck me that I would knock at the door and arouse the people. It was, however, one thing to knock, and another to arouse them. I knocked and knocked, but there was not the slightest answer. There might have been fire or murder, for any good that rural public-house might have effected.

I remember so well that, high up in a bigger kind of house, as I left the village, there was a light burning. That light puzzled me. In an aimless kind of way I began to speculate about it. Was anybody ill, and a silent watcher there by a hopeless bedside? Was there some writer or student earnestly working away at some subject with which great issues were connected? Was there some poor bailiff-haunted man, to whom the light was a signal that

he might return in safety to the home for the few hours which yet remained of night?

I strode on. Only the deep bay-ing of a single hound from one of the homesteads saluted me. I was in the country again. But let me not say that the country-side was voiceless. To one who has an eye and ear attuned, this is never really the case. The wind sighed, the trees groaned, the rivulet whispered, the insects chirruped, the owl blinked, the bat flew, the linnet sprang, the pheasant whirled, in the little distance as I climbed the hill.

But very singularly, as I turned a corner of the road, and for the first time the full side of the church came into view, it struck me that there was a light burning through a window close to an angle of a building. Could it be any reflection of the moonlight? Could it be the first flush of the dawn, for the night was now nearly worn away? I soon satisfied myself that it could be neither. I resolved to reconnoitre. What possibly could be going on in a lonely country church at such an hour? Was it likely—so the suspicion arose in my mind—that any one could be tampering with the parish register?

I wonder if my readers know much about parish registers? I happen to know a good deal about them. In the present trim and taut days of ecclesiastical accuracy registers are kept most punctiliously. They are deposited in strong safes, and, what makes everything secure, duplicate copies are transmitted to Somerset House. But the old registers were kept very differently. Sometimes the clergyman kept them, kept them knocking about his study or den; or the clerk perhaps kept them in equally careless fashion; or they may have been so much lumber in

the vestry, or have been properly secured therein in chest of oak or iron. There are now separate books for births, deaths, and marriages; but in old times a single book often served for all three.

How these things may have been managed in Brettingham parish I do not know. But this is what I saw in the vestry of Brettingham church.

I stole quietly along, making myself quite sure that the light which I saw was in the vestry of the church. I contrived to raise myself, and to peer through the small diamond panes of the little window.

Sitting leisurely at a table, with his head student-fashion resting on his hand, with all the peacefulness and innocence of an over-worked meritorious curate diligently engaged in the archæological pursuit of reading up the old parish register, was Seymour Simpson, Esq., gentleman, an attorney of the law.

There were just one or two circumstances which interfered with the harmonious surroundings of this peaceful and literary gentleman. In the first place, he was reading the registers by the light of a villanous-looking lantern which would have done credit to any burglar. In the second place, a neat penknife was lying open in the immediate neighbourhood of old parchment, where penknife ought not to be, and a severed piece of parchment was lying by. In the third place, a small revolver was ill in harmony with the sacred surroundings of the place.

I gazed intently through the window, and watched him for several minutes—minutes that might have gone on for half an hour. At last he came to an entry which appeared to absorb his attention very greatly. He then turned to another part of the volume altogether. Then the penknife was

raised and was drawn towards the volume. Mr. Simpson leisurely lifted up his eyes towards the window. Then his eyes were raised towards mine. Acting on the impulse of the moment, I gave a perfect yell and dashed my stick through the glass. He started up, one hand holding some pages of the register-book, and the other a pistol. All the excitement of battle was upon me as I closed with him. Presently he seized the pistol and fired. The bullet whizzed close to my ears. Then there came a heavy blow on my head, and I fell prostrate.

When I awoke it was in the clear first fresh hour of dawn. I was thoroughly confused, and could not recall where I was. A tall figure, with venerable locks and kindly aspect, was bending over me.

‘Are you better?’ he said. ‘You have been violently stunned. At first I was afraid that you had been killed.’

The encounter had taken place just outside the vestry-door in the churchyard.

‘My son has been ill for days with typhoid fever. He had been deliriously raving. I thought his time was come, and that his life was very near an end. Suddenly at half-past four he turned round to me, and said quite quietly, “Father, there’s a pistol-shot in the direction of the church.” I had not heard it. I cannot conceive it possible that he could have heard it, except that in the delirium of fever the senses are sometimes preternaturally heightened. But looking out from one of the windows in his room, which commands the churchyard, I saw that there was a light in the vestry. So I put on my overcoat and came to see.’

‘Were you not afraid?’

‘Afraid! Thank God, I do not think that I know what fear is. I should not be afraid of going to



GOLDEN KNOCKER No. 1.

See the Story, p. 21.



my own parish church, where I have ministered all these years, and where I should specially feel myself under the wing of the Almighty. But tell me all about it.'

Some explanation followed, and while I was speaking the vicar went to a gravestone, and took up a paper that was fluttering past. In the heat of the scuffle the wretch had dropped the most important page of all from the register. It was that which recorded the marriage of Kate Bampfylde to John Egerton, the one missing link of Eleanor's pedigree.

CHAPTER X.

A GOLDEN KNOCKER.

THAT Christmas-day Eleanor and I were married in the little chapel of Moor Hall by the very speciallest of licenses. We were to be son and daughter to old Bampfylde. I am to assume the name and arms of Bampfylde. The old vicar, whose son is perfectly recovered, married us. The day after the ceremony Mr. Blogram left us for Kamskatka.

Of the guests who had been invited to resume their chambers with the golden knockers, Mr. Seymour Simpson was 'conspicuous by his absence.' He had taken his departure, on an important legal investigation, for Australia. The long arm of the law could

reach him there; but he counted, not inaccurately, on our forbearance.

Eleanor's claim had been carefully investigated by old Mr. Bampfylde and Mr. Blogram, and they were so entirely satisfied with it, that they did not think it necessary to refer the matter to a bench of possible judges. Mr. Grote, in one of the notes to his History, says that a judge owed to him that if he heard a good story well put, he found it almost impossible to divest himself of a bias. So much of the advocate always lurks in the judge. Such a judge we found in Mr. Bampfylde. His own heart pleaded for us, and I expect the decision would have been in our favour even if our case had been weak instead of the strong one that it was.

With the railway company I seemed likely to have a long and animated correspondence. The secretary inveighed against the atrocity of my conduct. To so obvious a remark there was of course no rejoinder. I followed Napoleon's principle, and allowed the company's letters to answer themselves. Bampfylde, however, has a keen conscience in all these matters, and called at the office and settled their claim.

He insists, with characteristic whimsicality, that for a twelvemonth at least we shall occupy the bridal chamber, Golden Knocker No. 1, which always excited the admiration of his guests.

THE FAMILY GHOST.

WELL, this was the story as told to me
That noon by an elderly serving-man,
Who droned his tale in a minor key—
A dismal historian.

(Place—picture-gallery, Leighley Hall,
A lodging adapted for splenetics,
With portraits hanging from either wall.
Date—autumn, 'seventy-six.

A picture back in a dim recess
Of Gordon Leighley and Lady Clare ;
The lady charming and bright of dress,
And he grim-featured and spare.)

Thus spake the elderly serving-man,
With a tinge of pride in his household air :
' An old, old story of course began
With the beautiful Lady Clare.

A spark of Prince Rupert's cavalry
Was carried here, wounded, during the war,
And soon grew stronger and well, but she
Fell witched for his love e'ermore.

The stern old lord saw the curse—ah, well,
And she was fickle and he was hard ;
And the gossips about that time did tell
Of a quarrel on yonder sward.

The rapiers flashed in the harvest moon,
They glittered and clashed in the silent night ;
And Lady Clare in a death-like swoon
Lay quiet and passing white.

The moon was hidden, the blades were still,
And the serving-men looked out on the sward ;
But only the nightingale piped on the hill,
And the elms kept speechless guard :

For they found the cavalier lying there,
Run through by the old lord's Puritan blade ;
And by his side was the Lady Clare,
With a gash in the flowered brocade.'

Miss Lucy Leighley, aged sweet sixteen,
Looks up enthralled at the serving-man ;
In wonder, perchance, how that lovely queen
Could have wedded the Puritan.

The clock strikes twelve, and she issues forth
From the blue boudoir near the yellow room—
It was Cromwell's room when up in the north,
Ere his monarch met his doom.

She crouches close by the wall, and waits—
She is bent upon seeing Sir Gordon 'walk ;'
In life her ancestors knew such hates
That even their ghosts must stalk.

('For leastways,' added the serving-man,
'Of a night he moves in the old oak frame,
I'll swear to it—I and the good wife can,
And my father could do the same.')

The moon looks into the corridor,
On the freezing face and the long lithe blade ;
And a ghostly tree on the polished floor
Casts a weird and shimmering shade.

It is half-past twelve, and the white light steals
On the flowered brocade and the satined feet ;
It is one, and the glittering moon reveals
A gash where the bosoms meet.

And the lithe blade grows to a sanguined hue,
And a stain grows red on the gloved right hand ;
She starts and shrieks, and—eh ? yes, 'tis true !—
There is blood on the pictured sand !

Were these the terrors of Lucy's brain,
Mere phantasy or hallucination,
That awoke her screams again and again ?—
And thus terminates my narration.

Domestics crowding from either wing—
Miss Lucy lying all pale and white—
Feathers and salts—And that's all ; now ring
The curtain, and so good-night !

H. F. B. A.

A ROMANCE IN BORROWED PLUMES.

CHAPTER I.

ON such a sunny morning in the heart of a golden October the run from Jersey to Guernsey in the good steamer Southampton would have been the height of enjoyment to all on board, bad sailors and good, if wind and tide had not proved so perverse. As it happened, there were many immovable occupants of the canopied seats on the quarter-deck, and the ladies' cabin did not lack tenants. Amongst the latter were Clara and Amy Chadwick. To them, poor things, the briefest sea-voyage, no matter how gracious the weather, or how bland and agreeable wind and tide, was a period of unqualified misery. Not so to their lively cousin, Isabel Skelton. She loved the sea in all its moods, and verily the sea seemed to love her. Since they left Jersey she has not set eyes on her cousins. They descended into the cabin as the boat steamed out of the harbour, leaving her to her own devices. She has not forsaken the bridge from the moment the barrier was removed; and now, as the Southampton nears St. Peter's Port, she is almost sorry the voyage is about to terminate, albeit they are an hour beyond the average duration of the run.

This is a day in her delightful holiday. The father of her cousins—excellent uncle Philip—invited her 'to accompany him and the girls on their tour through the north of France.' They have left him at St. Malo. On parting with them, he said,

'I have business which will detain me in this neighbourhood

for a couple of days, so you had better go on without me, especially as that party at Cornthwaite's is a young folks' affair, and I should only be in the way. Of course I shall spend an evening with him in Guernsey as I return, to talk over old times; but you get on. Isabel will take care of you.'

His continual deference to his niece as a person more to be relied on than his own daughters gives anything but pleasure to them. She is their junior. Her experience is inferior in all respects to theirs. She has seen less society, has tasted less life. They, however, are too much in awe of their father to openly manifest any objection to his views; and consequently, when Clara and Amy do 'show temper' to their cousin, it is on occasions when the field is literally their own. They are fine showy girls; but she is pretty, and 'as sweet as English air can make her.' Hers has been the robust training of a farmer's daughter; theirs, that of the spoilt darlings of a wealthy merchant-prince. They have been invited to break their voyage at Guernsey, in order to take part in an evening at the house of their father's retired friend, Stephen Cornthwaite. The programme embraces dinner, a carpet-dance, and charades. The Misses Chadwick are bent on conquest, and, like the uncomely elder sisters in the story of *Cinderella*, have disclosed their intentions to Isabel. She knows intuitively that she owes her invitation solely to the kind consideration of her uncle Philip. If they had had their will she would

have been condemned to spend her evening at the hotel, which is their present temporary destination.

The passengers have been banished from the bridge, and are grouped upon the quarter-deck, gazing with interest on the picturesque town of St. Peter's Port, rising precipitously roof upon roof from the back of the extensive harbours to the topmost heights beyond. Those persons bound for Guernsey, who are sufficiently themselves to undertake the task, are picking out their luggage from the pile that has been placed ready for landing, and are, laden with umbrellas, bouquets of flowers, and handbags, otherwise preparing to step ashore. The Misses Chadwick have not yet emerged from the cabin. Miss Skelton, every feature of her bright face betraying the keenness of her enjoyment, has no thought for *her* baggage. Besides—

'You are certain I cannot be of any service to you?'

The voice is that of a tall handsome young fellow of about five-and-twenty, who has shown her a good deal of delicate attention during the voyage. He had found her a camp-stool and rug, and had 'packed her up' under a part of the paddle-box, where she was snugly protected from the showers of spray that dashed over the bridge. She, on the other hand, had shown no little interest in the contents of his sketch-book.

'Thank you very much, my cousins and myself are expected, and we are only going to the hotel.'

'May I—' he began, and then, appearing to recollect himself, he added, 'Do you remain long in Guernsey?'

'That depends entirely on my uncle,' replied Isabel ingenuously. 'He will follow us from St. Malo the day after to-morrow.'

'Then I must wish you good-morning.'

'Good-morning, and thank you.'

There was the faintest tinge of a rosebud blush on Isabel's face as she watched him ascend the ladder preparatory to his landing. Was she sorry he was going? Had she been in the mood for self-examination that was not a time for indulging in the exercise, as her cousins took care to let her know.

'Please, miss, you are wanted in the saloon.'

This message, delivered by one of the steward's boys, recalled her to a sense of the responsibilities of the moment. With a sly smile she hastened to the helpless beings that had been consigned to her care, and found them ill and irritable, and ripe with reproaches for her neglect. To her Clara,

'This is just like you, Isabel. Because you are that amazing masculine sort of creature called a good sailor, you have no compassion whatever for the natural infirmities of others. I hope I am not cruel, but I should like to see you prostrated once—only once—and then you would know what it is.'

Then Amy,

'So should I, Clarry. People with the strength of ploughboys cannot be expected to sympathise with such fragile creatures as us. You have been enjoying yourself, I suppose; while we—ugh! Do let us get ashore, Isabel, and pray do not waste any time in looking after our trunks and things. They are all labelled, and they can be sent after us to the hotel.'

Isabel judged it wise to make no reply to her cousins' petulant reproaches. Addressing herself with cheerful energy to getting the two flaccid young ladies ashore, she and they were speedily seated

in an open carriage—minus the luggage, which she had ordered to be sent on—and were in a brief space of time being driven towards the Fermain Hotel. As they left the harbour and its unpleasant associations behind, the Misses Chadwick gradually recovered their vivacity, and at the same time became sweeter-tempered.

‘You never were here before, Isabel?’ said Clara; ‘of course not. It is a dreadfully hilly place, but I think you will like it. I do not profess to understand such things; but those who do, Lionel Grant, for example—why, look, look, Amy, there he is!’ and she and her sister acknowledged in the most *prononcé* manner, and affably withal, the salute of a gentleman who was proceeding in the direction which the carriage was taking. It was Isabel’s *compagnon de voyage*. As his smile, if not his bow, was evidently directed as much to her as to her cousins, she also inclined her head, blushing the while, this time the colour of a full-blown rose.

‘Why, Isabel,’ exclaimed Amy, ‘do you know him? How’s that? He has been sketching in Jersey these three weeks, and you never surely met him in England.’

‘I never saw him until this morning on board the boat,’ replied Isabel simply.

‘O!’ exclaimed Clara, with meaning, at the same time exchanging glances with her sister. ‘Well, you will not require an introduction to him this evening at the Cornthwaites.’

‘He is to be there, then?’ eagerly ejaculated Isabel.

‘I suppose so,’ rejoined she, with an air of petulance; ‘he is a friend of the Cornthwaites. But I fail to see what there is to gush about in that assurance. Doubtless there will be others at the

party as nice as he. One would think you were smitten.’

To these rude and ill-natured remarks Isabel vouchsafed no reply, and as they had reached their hotel neither of Cinderella’s elder sisters troubled to note the effect on Cinderella of the malicious little speech. It was clear that the Misses Chadwick were put out by the knowledge of the accident which had brought Mr. Lionel Grant and Miss Isabel Skelton together. On returning from their own apartments to the coffee-room, to supplement the apology for a breakfast which they had had in Jersey by partaking of a more substantial repast, the young ladies found, to the distress of one of them, that part of the luggage had gone forward to Southampton. Isabel’s trunk was missing! She could have cried with vexation as she thought of the party at the Cornthwaites’. Clara, the grittier of the two sisters, said,

‘O, well, it can’t be helped; you will have to send an apology. You might have one of my dresses, but it would not fit; and as for Amy—’

‘I have it,’ exclaimed better-natured Amy, interrupting her sister. She was just the least bit sorry for Isabel. ‘You know that bloomy gray dress of mine; wear that. The trimming is rather shabby, but what is to be done? And fine feathers don’t always make fine birds, you know.’

‘Thank you,’ exclaimed Isabel; ‘I shall be able to make that do nicely.’ In her joy she kissed Amy, which mark of gratitude that young person received with a slight feeling of compunction. It was gratifying to her in another sense than that of pure compassion to think that her cousin was content to be attired for the party in a cast-off dress. Now Miss Skel-

ton was by no means prepared to concede even the occasional fallacy of the proverb which had been quoted by Amy. She felt in her heart that fine feathers do make fine birds, in the eyes of most people. And was not Mr. Lionel Grant an artist? and— She checked her thoughts in their wild career at this point, and having got rid of the society of the Misses Chadwick, she hoped, for the day, the dress was laid out for careful inspection, and the shrewd advice of the landlady's daughter as to ways and means of renovation sought and obtained. Leaving her friend in council to summon the skilled young person who was to practically aid in the transformation of the dress, Miss Skelton went in search of dainty garniture. The very thing! There, in the window of a shop containing a wonderful collection of fragments of works of art and odds and ends of *bijouterie*, was exhibited a bundle of peacock feathers; her dress should be adorned with the eyes of Argus, and Miss Amy's observation literally confuted! When a few hours later Isabel scanned with a naïve sense of complacency the finishing touches of her tiring-woman, there ran timidly through her thoughts this trembling question: 'I wonder what he will think?' The next moment she reproached herself for attaching any importance whatever to the opinion of a stranger, who doubtless felt no more than a passing feeling of interest in her. But her cousins! Were they not determined on capture? It was a silent drive from the hotel to the rambling old Guernsey farmhouse in St. Martin's parish, which years before the taste and enterprise of Mr. Cornthwaite had transformed into a beautiful residence; and when the three girls arrived

thither, two of them in their hearts reluctantly admitted that the third, in the discarded dress of bloomy gray and rich feather trimming, looked almost beautiful.

CHAPTER II.

It was a merry dinner-party. Mr. and Mrs. Cornthwaite could not do enough to pleasure their guests, both then and subsequently, and being of that order of people who have sunny notions of life, and never grow old, they succeeded to admiration throughout. Twice only during the evening had Lionel Grant found himself in the immediate society of Miss Skelton, once as her partner in a quadrille, and again as an actor with her in a charade.

In their interchange of the rippling amenities of society, there appeared to each converser more meaning than those littlenesses usually carry. His words were earnest, hers haltingly timorous.

'I had no idea this morning that I was to have the pleasure of meeting you here. I am acquainted with Miss Chadwick and her sister. I met them a great deal in London last season. Is it not singular they never referred to you?'

'Not at all,' Isabel replied. 'Our lives are so different. I am a farmer's daughter, and I live in Kent. We are all busy at home in quite another way from theirs during what you call the London season.'

'Odd, now,' said Lionel, with a pleasant laugh, 'but when I saw you this evening in that dress—you must not consider me rude—I am an artist, you know—my thoughts flew at once to the Hetty of *Adam Bede* (you have read *Adam Bede*?), and I said to myself that is just the costume she would

have worn on an occasion like this. Your own idea, Miss Skelton?

'O dear, no. An adaptation.' And she thereupon told him the story of the dress's conversion.

After the charade, in which Miss Skelton and Mr. Grant enacted parts, Isabel's two cousins, who had separately and conjointly observed the what they were pleased to term brazen flirtation of the pair, took Isabel to task. It was Clara who spoke.

'Isabel Skelton, Amy and I are more surprised than words can express. Are you—are you aware that your frequent conversations with Mr. Grant, who is a hardened flirt' (this was a falsehood coined on the spot), 'have been noticed by others besides ourselves? Pray be more circumspect; otherwise I shall feel it my duty to tell papa.'

Nothing was farther from Miss Chadwick's intentions than the fulfilment of this threat; but she hoped it would depress her cousin, and it did. The minutes which had sped so joyously began to drag with Isabel, who gradually became intensely miserable, and wished herself miles away. When Mr. Grant next accosted her she replied to him with an air of constraint. Looking unconsciously from her face to that of Clara's, he saw there a malicious sparkle which let light into the cause of Miss Skelton's change of manner. So, she had been interfering!

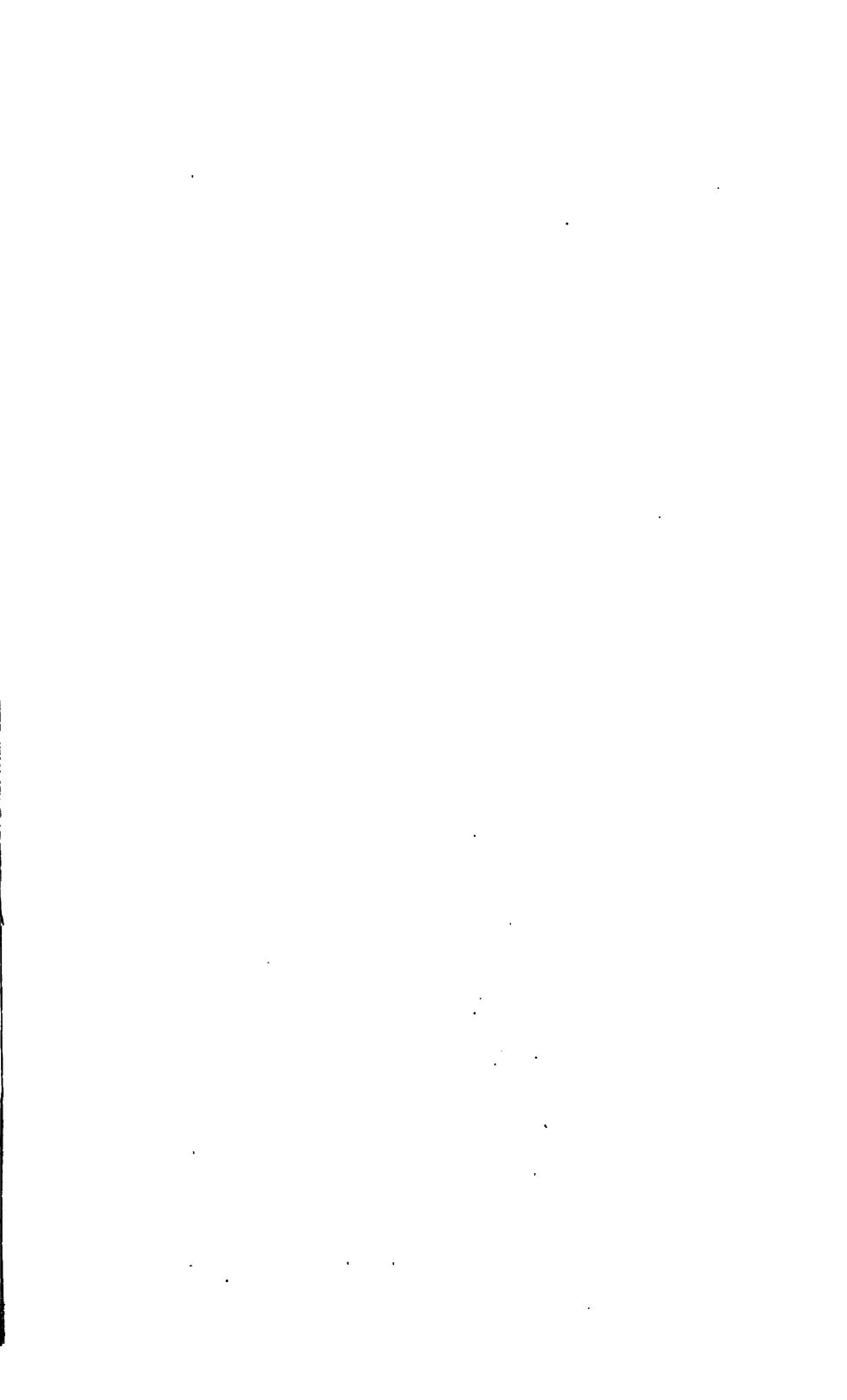
'O Mr. Cornthwaite, what a lovely moonlight night!' exclaimed Miss Chadwick later on, as she looked from the verandah across the shining sea; 'do take us for a walk to Moulin Huet.' The amusements were by this time flagging, and Clara feared that, during the lull, Mr. Grant and her cousin might come together again.

'To Moulin Huet to-night, my dear! Are you mad? Remember the moon is inconstant, and, alas, my climbing days are over! But if you will promise to be very discreet, and Lionel will act as guide, go by all means. I consign you especially to his care. Let us to cards, my friends, while these madcaps go in search of the picturesque.'

The arrangement harmonised with Clara's views, but not with Grant's. However, he put the best face he could on the matter, and led the way, accompanied by Miss Chadwick and followed by Amy, Isabel, and two Guernsey young ladies and their respective cavaliers. Isabel was attended by an ancient beau, gallant to a fault, who belonged to the Sarnian order of the Sixties. Neither of them found the other's conversation very entertaining. The party had not proceeded far when Lionel exclaimed,

'Now, ladies, which is it to be, comfort or a spice of danger?'

'By all means let us have some excitement,' rejoined Clara. She had confidence in her protector. The beau, who had lost confidence in himself, counselled prudence; but he was overruled. Disposing of their trains in a manner that boded ill for the appearance of those appendages on the morrow, the ladies vigorously pursued the tortuous path which was struck out by their guide, and the entire party speedily gained the heights. In the scramble Isabel, who had persistently declined the assistance of her companion—he really had no superfluous stamina to spare—found herself alone. It troubled her, so miserable was the mood into which she had wrought herself, to remain with the rest of the capricious expedition, and so, scarcely heeding the direction in which she wandered, she gradually





‘[Lancel] scanned with a naive sense of complacency the finishing touches of her tiring-woman.’



lost the sound of their voices. The wind was freshening and driving dark clouds across the face of the moon in a manner that foretold a squall. Why were Clara and Amy so cruel to her? She was sure there was nothing in her innocent enjoyment of the bright conversation and pleasant society of Lionel Grant—what a dear handsome fellow he was!—which they could properly find fault with. They were jealous. That was it. They grudged—

A fall, a piercing scream, a dull thud, and silence.

She had missed her footing on the shorn grass, which is there as smooth as velvet, and had been precipitated into the ugly depths below.

It is evident that her cry has been heard. A loud ringing shout comes from the other side of the bay. It is the voice of Lionel Grant. He has rudely cast aside Miss Chadwick, and seriously jeopardised the safety of that young lady in his mad anxiety to learn the meaning of that cry of terror.

'Where is Miss Skelton? Will nobody speak? Braye' (the name of the bean), 'she was in your charge.'

Treating with indignant scorn the stammering apologies of the feeble old gentleman, Grant turned to the two Miss Chadwicks, now huddled together, and said fiercely,

'I must ask you to take care of yourselves—'

'O Mr. Grant, if anything should have happened to Isabel—'

'Would you be very sorry?' he asked bitterly.

Hereupon Clara began to cry. Paying not the least attention to her grief, Lionel turned to the men and said,

'Those of you who know the bay, come with me. There is not a moment to be lost. A heavy squall is coming on.'

Whereupon he sped with perilous alacrity in the direction whence the shriek had appeared to come. All this happened in the space of a few moments. As Grant's voice with its continuous cry, 'Miss Skelton, Miss Skelton!' was heard lower and lower in the craggy hollow of the bay, the threatened squall came on in bitter earnest, and perfected the physical misery of the women, who were crouched in a heap under the joint protection of a stone wall and our friend Braye. The moon was hidden behind a dense cloud.

As Lionel and his Guernsey aids proceeded in their search, he with feverish rapidity, it became evident that without the light of the moon the chance of finding the poor girl was remote indeed. He continued his cry, 'Miss Skelton, Miss Skelton!' with piteous force. Then he prayed for a blink, just a blink, of the light of the moon. During those fearful minutes the knowledge came to him like a flash of inspiration that he loved this bonny maid of Kent with a love unspeakable, and if—But the thought was maddening. O, for the moon! Thank God, there it was at last. Pausing in his downward career, he peered with painful care near and beyond him, and descried—something. What was it that shone so curiously about a dozen feet below the crag over which he leaned? The fringe of peacock feathers. Argus's eyes had met his! Calling aloud for assistance as he lifted up her head, bleeding from the fall that had stunned her, he whispered her name:

'Miss Skelton—Isabel—dear Isabel! It is I, Lionel Grant. You know me. Thank God, she lives!'

They carried her to the footpath that skirts the bay, and found with joy that, save the severe

wound she had sustained in her head, she was unhurt.

'Will it leave a scar?' she asked, as, leaning upon Lionel, they slowly proceeded to where a carriage was waiting to take her to Mr. Cornthwaite's.

'Yes, dear,' he whispered, 'in my heart. But you must heal that.'

And she will. Clara and Amy are forgiven. Theirs was a heavy punishment, but it was deserved.

They *quite* approved of the engagement, they told Isabel, for Mr. Grant was *everything* that could be desired, and they meant to tell papa so. It is probable that Lionel's next holiday will be spent in the hop country. He has been told that the scenery about Maidstone is very fine, and he has some notion of painting a Hetty in a costume he once saw of bloomy gray trimmed with 'the eyes of Argus.'

B. W.



BEAUTY AND THE BEAST.

I.

A PARABLE of the old days,
Of matter and soul at strife,
Of Beauty hid in the thought maze,
Not decking the outer life;
That dwelt in this great world garden,

Where lilies and roses blow
For natures no griefs may harden,
And watched the year's children
grow,

With the pity and envy blended
Of an elder son of Time,
For creatures so softly tended,
And nursed for so short a prime;
But ever the roses' lover,

With more than a lover's care,
Protecting in lawn and cover
His treasures so sweet and fair.
Herein a merchant wanders

From wintry snows outside,
In wonder lost he ponders,
What means this palace wide?
Where silent welcomes greet him
From airy viewless hands,
And slaves that never meet him
Fulfil his least commands;
Till he plucks at the sacred flower—
Sweets to his sweet to bear—
And buys in that fateful hour
His life with his daughter dear.
Great debt she pays with gladness
From all her loving heart,
Although bowed down with sadness
From his loved hearth to part.

II.

A queen among strange roses,
She moves with weary face;
'Gainst Love her flower heart closes,
Nor grants him word of grace.
Not this the fair immortal,
Sight dazzling as the sun,
Should storm her soul's shut portal;
And so she cares for none
Of all his quaint devices
To please her wayward thought,
Nor gem nor flower entices—
His homage is as naught.

She pines with a grief unspoken,
Eyes that for home still plead,
So he sends her there with a token
To claim her in time of need;
Far better that *his* were broken
Than her dear heart should bleed.

III.

She revels without measure
In simple home delights;
Her days are one long pleasure—
But what of dreamful nights?
Haunted by eyes that darken
Nightly with new despair,
Ears for her voice that hearken,
Lips that are pale with care;
Thoughts to her window thronging,
E'en in her dreams a share;
Hands still outstretched in longing,
Her burden of life to bear.
Her sceptre is sure departed,
For she owns a king in dreams;
Though queen of self, one-hearted,
Still to herself she seems
A slave, for all her seeming,
And bound to his behest.
Her proud heart ever deeming
Such love its holy guest,
Yet drawn to his by sorrow,
Some comfort fain would give,
When yet it did but borrow
From thence whereon to live.
Dying beneath the roses
She found him, all forlorn;
His failing eyes he closes,
He only feels their thorn;
When, lo, two sweet, sweet flowers
On his parched lips are pressed,
Fresh as from morning showers
In dewy coolness dressed.
So the cruel spell was ended,
Ended the earth's disguise;
Wonder and worship blended
He read in her falling eyes.

God send such resurrection
To each fair hidden soul,
And with like sweet reflection
Make fasting mourners whole!

S. M.

SAINT OR SINNER?

A Marrying Speculation.

CHAPTER I.

IN DOUBT.

'I DON'T expect you to see the strength of my arguments, because you are in love, and love is proverbially blind; but if you had the full benefit of your mental perception, you would see it, all the same. You are like the person in the play; you "love a bright particular star, and think to wed it:" but depend upon it, my dear Sydney, the stage is a bad school for wives, and stars that shine in that hemisphere had better be admired at a distance. Besides, what do you know about the girl, her people, her education, and all those other matters about which a man ought to be so sure before he marries?'

In this manner, very earnestly indeed, my friend Arthur Herbert queries and advises as we walk our horses through Richmond Park on one of those bright November days which sometimes break the dreary monotony of the dulllest of months.

'Look in her face and doubt her if you can!' I answer, with enthusiasm.

'Quite so; yes, exactly. I know all about that; but I am taking a common-sense view of the business, and I earnestly advise you not to be precipitate,' Arthur urges.

'Delay implies doubt; and to doubt her—It's too absurd to discuss,' I reply.

'My dear fellow, you probably do not remember that you are quoting from an early epistle which

Arthur Pendennis addressed to his uncle. He said 'a delay implies a doubt;' and yet you will admit that his first entanglement was not marked by extraordinary discrimination. You are not a love-sick boy of eighteen, but a man of some discernment, ten years older; and the mischief of it is, that you are your own master, with nearly three thousand a year to throw away.'

'But would it be throwing money away to marry Ethel Heathfield? You speak very seriously, Arthur. It cannot be that you know anything against the girl? I ask, in sudden alarm; a feeling, however, which disappears as soon as I remember her pure eyes and innocent smile.

'No,' he answers at once, and yet, as it seems to my suspicious ears, with something of hesitation or constraint in his manner; 'of course I know nothing, or I should feel bound to tell you. But it must be that a girl who has led her life has at times been mixed up with queer people. She and that great artist (from a photographer's shop-window point of view) Ellen Grosvenor were in the theatre together for a long time, and were friends, I believe, and without any thought of harm, you know—'

'I know one thing—that Ethel never would nor could have had any sort of association with such a creature as Ellen Grosvenor. Their being together in the same theatre is one of the misfortunes of Ethel's life; but surely that should not be suffered to wreck

our happiness. We all of us meet queer people in our time.'

'Yes; only we don't all want to marry their acquaintances,' he answers, in a dry, almost an angry, tone, which I do not at all like; and having no response ready at hand, we ride on in silence, occupied with our own thoughts.

I had for many months, in common with the vast majority of metropolitan playgoers, greatly admired Ethel Heathfield, a young actress of singular charm, grace, and refinement. My acquaintance with theatrical people was of the slightest; and it had never occurred to me as remotely probable that I should ever hear her soft voice uttering words which were the coinage of her own brain. Strolling through a picture-gallery one afternoon, however, I had come across a friend, whose first dramatic essay, a comedy of modern life, had met with considerable success. A young lady accompanied him, veiled and dressed in the simplest good taste, and it was not until he mentioned her name on introducing me that I recognised Ethel Heathfield. The young writer, spurred on to fresh exertions, was in the throes of a new play. Ethel had been much pleased with the character of the heroine, and their visit to the gallery was for the purpose of seeing a picture from which valuable hints as to costume were to be derived. The girl's pleasant gentle manner, her keen intelligence and innate appreciation of art, greatly charmed me, both as a possibly susceptible being and as a painter; and in the latter character I was able to be of service in sketching some of the designs which were to be utilised in my friend's new piece. In those days I was too poor to think of marriage, or to pursue the thought if it entered my head;

but the death of an aunt had put me into possession of a fortune; and though no formal engagement had been made between Ethel and myself, our intimacy had grown since that first meeting, and developed into a warmer feeling, as my friends were for the most part aware. Even, indeed, the old relative whose money I had inherited had some knowledge of the affair; and my hesitation in speaking to Ethel was mainly caused by a letter which had accompanied her bequest, and been delivered to me only after her death.

'I leave you this money,' she wrote, 'in the hope and belief that you will use it wisely. I have heard that you are forming a connection, of what, had I less trust in your head and heart, I should consider a very doubtful nature; and I only beg you, as my last request, never to marry a woman who is not worthy of your love. Think, not altogether of yourself, but of the children which may come in the future, and be sure that their mother is, in the noblest sense of the term, a good and true woman. And at any rate I ask you, for my sake, to do nothing rashly, but at least to wait until you have reason to be sure.'

Nearly six months had passed since I had read the letter, but every week had added to my confidence in Ethel's goodness. One day, indeed, I casually heard that she had been calling at Ellen Grosvenor's house, a story the impossibility of which had seemed sufficient contradiction. I felt how hateful association with a bold, vulgar, ignorant woman of the Grosvenor stamp must be to a gentle creature like Ethel Heathfield; and paid no attention to so wildly improbable an idea.

My friend's cautions, then, fell on a deaf ear; and, moreover, I knew why a lingering and unwor-

thy suspicion of Ethel had generated in his mind. Walking one day through Kensington Gardens, he had noticed Ethel in conversation—in close and earnest argument, he reported—with Lord Borton, a young gentleman of doubtful reputation in many particulars, and with whom Miss Grosvenor's name was disagreeably associated. I had made no inquiries on the subject, as Ethel had not mentioned her interview with him; for I placed in her implicit reliance. I hoped that a personal acquaintance with Ethel would have dissipated his opposition to the idea of our marriage; but this had failed, and when we left her neat little house, my inquiry how he liked her had brought the answer, 'Very much indeed, especially as Celia. I should think she could almost play Juliet.' A disappointing reply to me, who had expected to find him enthusiastic in the praise of her personal qualities.

So we rode on; I perhaps not in the most amiable frame of mind. If Herbert had been able to make any definitive charge against the girl I loved, had he even found a justification for any well-grounded suspicion, I could have argued the question, and, I felt certain, should have been able to convince him of his error. To the method he adopted of showing his displeasure with what I was on the eve of doing, there was no answer. He did not like the associations of the stage. Ethel was 'not an actress of the common type, he would admit—wholly different, if I liked. Yes, a true gentlewoman; but—' There always was a but; and coming from him, my oldest and closest friend, it seriously annoyed me.

Under these circumstances our ride was far from being a pleasant one. It was only on the previous

afternoon that he had seen Ethel, and even though on leaving her house he had refused to dissociate her from her theatrical life, I fondly imagined that a little reflection on her simplicity and kindly goodness would have brought him to see her more with my eyes.

'Shall we get on? It's cold, and we shall be late for lunch. There's Borton, bound to the Star and Garter for his. He honoured me with an invitation to meet Miss Grosvenor and some friends of theirs,' Herbert said, as a dog-cart drove past, and he saluted its occupant with a very cool nod. 'Thank goodness, they pilled him at the club last week; and I fancy he won't frequent the Newmarket much till he has given a better account of Highflyer's running than he has managed to concoct at present.'

Borton's proceedings on the turf were not at all to the satisfaction of the racing community, or to those at any rate who were not in the swim with him; nor had his theatrical management, as lessee of the Opéra Bouffe Theatre, been to the edification of the decent portion of the playgoing public.

'Ah,' Herbert continued, 'here come the rest of the party, no doubt. Miss Grosvenor and—See who is with her!' he added, with a sudden change of tone, which induced me to look eagerly towards an approaching carriage.

Decked in somewhat less than her customary radiance of attire, Miss Grosvenor was rapidly driven towards us, and seated by her side was—Ethel Heathfield.

CHAPTER II.

DOUBTS DISPELLED.

'I do not think you have any right to question my proceedings;

and if you had the right to ask, I might not feel justified in answering. I had noticed—with feelings of which I shall not now speak—the fancy, or, as you say, the affection, you had for me ; but I have noticed also a restraint, a want of confidence, in your manner, which has pained me more than I can tell you. Your letter strengthens my self-respect, and enables me to say what but for womanly weakness—for reasons I cannot enter upon—I should have said many weeks ago—that our intimacy must come to an end. Had you loved me truly, you would have had implicit confidence in me. I have no explanation to give of my “presence at Richmond with more than questionable associates,” and no more to say except to wish you heartily all the good things the world can give you.’

So Ethel wrote, and I repeated the words ; there was no occasion to read them, for I knew every line by heart, as I struggled on against the wind, which blew in my face showers of foam from the big waves rolling in under the cliffs at Rockington.

The necessity of writing and begging Ethel to tell me how she came to be in such strange companionship had been plain to me without Herbert’s strongly-worded advice ; and this was the response my letter had drawn. It was not until after I had read and studied her words, and realised what parting from her had come to mean, that I knew how deep my affection for her had grown ; and without consultation with my friend I had called at her house, to find her not at home. My own rooms seemed hateful to me, with reminiscences of her on every side in sketches, books, and music. I had therefore started off to a pleasantly unfashionable watering-

place, where out of season there was no chance of meeting anybody, and where I could sketch the grand effects of sea and cloud so frequently to be found on this coast in the stormy wintry weather. It was, indeed, she who had first told me of the beauties of Rockington, where she had once spent a summer ; and a vague sentiment of pleasure in being where she had been induced the choice.

And if I had found her, what could I have said ? Her letter was decisive ; and the half confession that she felt, and had not been indifferent to, my love assured me that, had explanation been possible, she would have explained. Unlikely, impossible as it had seemed, she must have been the companion of those from whom I had felt so confident she would have shrunk with dread and disgust ; and so I strove with but the very poorest success to drive the image of her gentle face and pleading tender eyes from my heart.

A battle with the wind along the bleak cliffs, or, better still, a cruise round the headland in one of the fishermen’s boats, suited my frame of mind much better than the pursuit of my calling, and the tiller or rope’s-end was more often in my hand than brush or maul-stick. Few mental distractions are more powerful with him who loves the ocean than

‘to sail
Where’er the surge may sweep, the tem-
pest’s breath prevail,’

as Byron writes ; and why he speaks of the ‘glad waters of the dark blue sea’ all who delight in being borne upon them can well understand.

But reaction after the excitement of a stormy voyage brought with it pain of double keenness. I felt not only my own sorrow,

but grief that she who had seemed so pure and good should have suffered this contamination. It was always with regret that I neared shore again. But on one day in early December, after a trip which had severely tested the seaworthiness of our brave little boat, and the skill of old Hayes, the fisherman, who now always accompanied me, there was no time to think of anything but the work in hand. The sea had become much rougher while we had been out, and landing was an operation attended by considerable difficulty and no little danger, as we plainly perceived by the size and strength of the breakers that thundered up on to the beach.

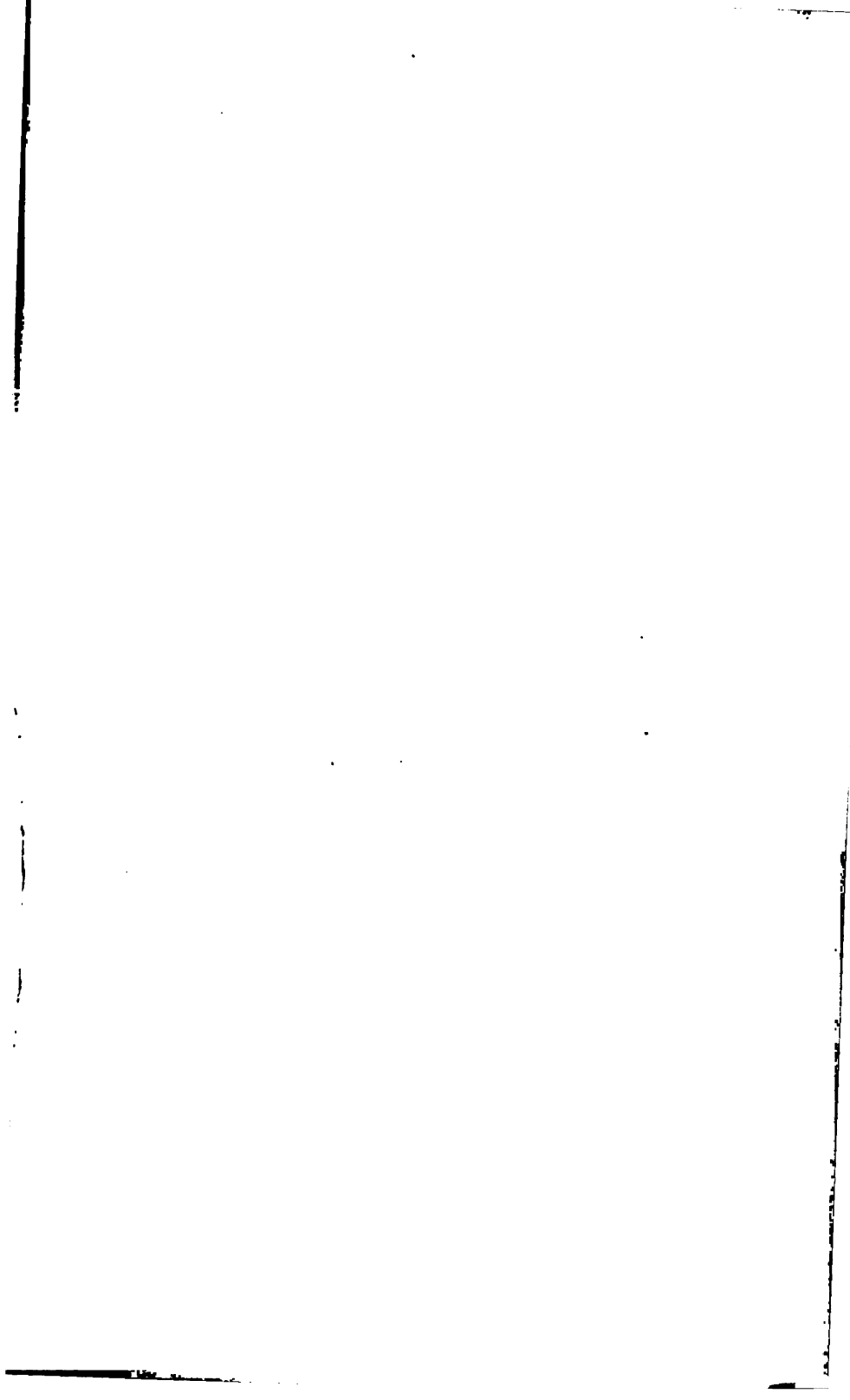
'Steady, William!' the old man called out to his son, who was at the helm. 'Hold on a minute, sir! I'll jump out and make fast the anchor;' and balancing himself on the prow, the moment her keel touched the shore he sprang upon the beach. Age had done little to destroy old Hayes's activity, and experience had taught him how to bring his boat ashore in the roughest seas. But for once the often-accomplished feat failed. He lost his footing, and, as it seemed, slid under the boat as it bumped violently on the stones, and a cry of pain showed too clearly that some mischief had been done. Springing at once ashore I hastened to his assistance, and William was by my side as soon as my feet were safely on the shingle left by the retreating billow. Before another could gather and break we had succeeded in pulling the old man well nigh beyond their reach, and soon discovered that in the fall or by the swing of the boat his leg was broken.

Improvising a stretcher by the aid of a sail and some spars, we bore him carefully to the town,

where means of easy conveyance to his cottage were found; and I hurried off to find a doctor to set the fractured limb, an operation which the old man bore with heroic fortitude, as became one of his training.

My boating was for the present brought to a close, as I did not like to hire a new attendant; and instead of being tossed about in the little craft, I made voyages in imagination as I listened to the old sailor's account of his adventurous life, which included some hot work with slavers on the African coast, a boyish experience of the navy when hearts of oak secured English supremacy on the waves, and a famous expedition to the Arctic seas. The old sailor's weather-beaten visage would light up and his pains depart as he recounted stories of bygone days, and for a time the look of deeply-seated sorrow which had marked lines on his face vanished.

His sturdy independence, too, pleased me. Of compensation for the injury received in my service he refused to hear, on the ground that it was not any fault of mine; though I may add that in the end I took care that his high-minded generosity did not go without recompense. He had a little money in hand, and if he wanted anything there was a 'fund' for injured sailors, as there appeared to be for many other objects. For in this respect Rockington was a very remarkable town. The living was absurdly small in value, and Flood, the incumbent, had a growing family; but nevertheless, as I discovered on making inquiries as to these various funds, he always had some agreeably substantial silver coins, often a piece of gold, and sometimes even a five-pound note, for any really deserving object; and among the





SAINT OR SINNER?

See the Story.



little colony of fishermen established at Rockington deserving objects were plentiful, especially in the winter time, when the boats could not get out.

With Flood I made many excursions, and learnt to take an interest in the joys and sorrows of many simple lives; so that as Christmas approached I had taken a fancy to the place, and determined to see out the old year in the almost-deserted town; and strive, by mitigating the grief of others, to find mitigation for my own.

Old Hayes meantime progressed apace, as one of his breeding and occupation is likely to do; and one day just before Christmas, when I had trudged out to his cottage, and, as was now the custom, had been met a little way off and escorted to the door by Nelson, the old dog, who had accepted me as a friend of the family and did his best to show me welcome, I found the invalid in singularly good spirits; albeit, as I entered, he had hastily dashed his hand across his eyes and thrust a letter into his pocket. After our usual chat, and the discussion of plans for a yachting expedition as soon as he was well enough to get about again, I walked to the town with my friend Flood, the parson, who had called just as I was leaving, and from him I heard more than the old man had cared to tell me. Hayes had a daughter, who had gone into domestic service some years before, and was supposed to have died; and to his joy and surprise a letter from her had just arrived. What more the epistle contained Flood did not know, for the old man had simply whispered to him, 'I've heard from my girl.'

On the next day I did not make my familiar journey to the cottage, and Nelson no doubt looked for me in vain. Instead,

I wandered about the cliffs, thinking—of Ethel. For thoughts of her recurred again and again, in spite of all efforts to drive them away. What pleasure could she have found in companionship with such a woman as Ellen Grosvenor? How could she bring herself to become the guest of such a man as Borton? She was an actress, and the most wonderful of her race if she could enjoy such feasts as that to which she was bound when last I saw her, and seem what she had seemed to me in the simplicity of her little home.

My reflections did not induce me to take another solitary ramble next day, so I sought out Flood, and went the rounds with him. His hearty cheerful manner and friendly greeting to those whose cottages he visited would have made him welcome, even had he not been known as the distributor of the 'fund' which did so much in so many quarters—mended so many nets, patched up so many boats, and found materials for so many meals when boats and nets were perforce idle.

Round by the beach and up the cliff soon brought us to old Hayes's cottage, and hardly waiting for the cheery 'Come in!' which usually answered our summons, we entered, glad to get rid of the burden we carried for the purpose of adding festivity to our friend's Christmas dinner. William was away; but his patient tenderness was not missed, for a girl stooped over the sofa and smoothed the pillows on which the injured leg lay. Our entrance caused her to turn her face, and to my amazement I recognised—Ellen Grosvenor.

The old man's daughter had returned, and Nelly Hayes who had played about the beach in childhood was once more in her father's home. She drew back with an

abashed bow as Flood stepped towards her; but he warmly grasped her hands, and bade her heartily welcome home, with a few earnest words of kindness which brought a gush of tears to her eyes.

And now I began to see the origin of the 'fund.' As some kind of reparation for her wasted life, she had sought to relieve the distresses of her old companions. And this discovery I expounded to Flood, who, however, corrected me, as we turned away and exchanged a few words, that we might not seem to be noting too closely how Ellen sobbed in her father's arms.

'No,' Flood said, 'you are wrong; but you shall see the origin of the fund in a moment;' and he went to the door, in answer to a knock which had just sounded. I glanced over his shoulder as he bent to open the latch, and there, framed in the doorway, was—Ethel Heathfield.

It had come on to rain heavily, and there she stood, the hood of her cloak thrown over her head, her sweet eyes fixed upon my face with an expression which told me that to doubt her supreme purity and goodness was as foolish as it was culpable. Often I had seen her decked with all the milliner's and jeweller's art, but never so utterly lovable as now gazing into my eyes.

Flood began an introduction. 'Miss Melton, may I have the pleasure of making known to you my friend—' But, to his amazement, I seized Ethel in my arms, and held her tightly clasped to the heart that had longed so ardently to meet her once again.

Little explanation need be added. Ethel's father, Heath Melton,

had been curate at Rockington, and her acquaintance with the place was far more than that of a visitor. He had striven to be the friend to the poor in his flock, and on his death Ethel, left unprovided for, had taken lessons in music with a view to teaching. The organist who taught her, however, had discovered her talent for the stage, with which he had been long connected, and advised that career in preference to the drudgery of teaching music in competition with so many hundreds of rival professors. She had succeeded beyond expectation, and with all the money she could spare she had continued her father's good work. Flood knew well what her life had been, and it was she who had induced Nelly Hayes to return home, had nursed her patiently through a long illness, and at last restored her to her father's arms.

'But why did you go to lunch with Lord Borton the time I saw you last?' I asked one day, in no doubt—thank Heaven for removing it—but from sheer curiosity.

'Lunch! I never went, nor did Nelly, that day. I think she said she had been asked, and had declined; for just then I had been able to make her think of old days here by the sea. We went for a drive together, because she said I seemed to shun her, and everybody else would; but we never knew that Lord Borton was near.'

'Can you forgive me and love me, and may I help you to aid your father's friends?' I ask.

The tightening clasp of her hand and the smile which beams in her pure eyes form a response more eloquent than words.

THE ARGUMENT IN FAVOUR OF GHOSTS.

I HAVE always been under the strong impression that the argument in favour of ghosts has failed to receive a sufficient amount of serious attention. The Spiritualists complained greatly that Faraday would not bestow any serious attention on the phenomena whose existence they alleged. For the rapping department of Spiritualism I have personally as much contempt as Faraday could have; but I think it a great pity that when a scientific issue was sought, the challenge was not seriously taken up. I think there is a much stronger argument in favour of the ghosts themselves than there is for their spirit-rapping. For instance, if Milton and Shakespeare condescend, by an elaborate but clumsy process of knocks, to make some extremely commonplace observations, I must greatly regret that their mental calibre has so deeply degenerated since the days they were in the flesh. And, indeed, if their remarks were of a better quality, I should still prefer limiting myself to their human publications. I grieve to say that there are still some sonnets of Shakespeare's about which my mind is not made up, and still some of the obscurer prose writings of Milton with which I am unacquainted. I should therefore venture to say to the rapping spirit: 'Illustrious rapper, I shall be exceedingly obliged to you for your communications as soon as I have finished the works composed by you while in a former state of existence. As soon as I have mastered those, I shall be grateful

for any further communications.' Milton, by the way, may not unfairly be claimed as a Spiritualist. We remember his words:

'Millions of spiritual beings walk the earth
Unseen, when both we sleep and when
we wake.'

At Christmas time, whether we believe in ghosts or not, we talk over ghost stories—talk over them, telling story after story, giving tradition upon tradition; very bold while the logs are heaped high and the wassail cup is going round; but perhaps the boldest slightly shy as he creeps along the long shadowy corridors of a country house, and into big bedrooms where everything is shrouded in deep gloom, out of which *anything* might come. A great deal of the conversation consists in ghost stories, more or less authenticated—generally, I am bound to say, *less* so—which each person has to relate. It is observable that every individual gives the story at secondhand. Nevertheless, I have met with one or two persons who have told a ghost story straight off. The remarkable ghost story relating to the late Theodore Alois Buckley, chaplain of Christ Church, Oxford, the translator of a good many Greek and Latin works for Bohn's series, is familiar to very many. Similarly I knew a most admirable and homely clergyman who used to tell what I may call a domestic ghost story. An old gentleman of his acquaintance dropped in to smoke a pipe with him one afternoon, and gave him some excellent and seasonable advice. Two items

were that he should never omit to have family prayers, and to say grace before dinner. The third item he always kept to himself. It transpired afterwards that his old friend had died at the very time when he entered the room and commenced the conversation. There is something like this in the ingenious story fabricated by De Foe of the apparition of Mrs. Veal, in order to get a circulation for Drelincourt *On Death*.

I observed that in all our argumentation there was a constant reference to the Good Book. Although some of our modern philosophers desire to improve it off the face of the earth, and think that we have reached a stage of civilisation in which it may be safely laid aside, it somehow seems that every discussion of this kind is incomplete without it. Indeed our young people showed a creditable knowledge of chapter and verse. Of course we heard of the old lady at Endor raising the ghost, and of people fancying that there might be the angel of Peter. However, I do not enter into the theological argument. Nevertheless, it may be fairly observed that scriptural authority is not to be alleged against the theory, but, on the contrary, so far as it goes, is in its favour.

The real argument is of a three-fold character.

First, there is no *à priori* improbability against the theory. Rather, like the biblical argument, the probability is in its favour.

Secondly, there is an enormous amount of uniform tradition in its favour.

Thirdly, there are various cases sufficiently authenticated according to the rules of evidence.

Now, without caring to be dogmatic, I venture to say that these considerations constitute an

argument well worthy of attention in favour of the ghost theory.

I do not venture to expand the argument, familiar to very many, that in every material body there is a spiritual body intermingled; and that when the material body decays there is a spiritual body which is liberated from the thralldom of the flesh. I believe that Mr. Serjeant Cox is one of the most eloquent exponents of this theory. According to him, the disembodied spirit is in a sense embodied, although the embodiments are not recognisable by our senses. But this does not signify, as there are many most potent real things which we cannot see, such as currents of the air and electricity. It is allowable to suppose that for good and sufficient reasons these forms may at times be permitted to be visible. We may believe that the blessed spirits will have something else and better to do than to take up that tangled skein of earthly affairs of which they must be heartily tired. Dean Ramsay tells a curious story of two old Scotchwomen, one of whom was dying: 'And if ye see our Jean in heaven, ye'll jest tell her we all be bidin' well.' 'Hist, woman,' returned the worthy saint, 'I can't go cleekin' all over heaven after your Jean.' *O sanctu simplicitas!* Without being anthropomorphic, we may believe, on the one hand, that while the liberated spirits will not do our errands, on the other hand, there may be great crises and emergencies for humanity, or for their dear ones—'*si quid mortalia tangunt*'—when they will have the will, if they have the desire, to manifest themselves. The first argument may be thus briefly summarised: Unless we are sheer atheists we believe that souls are immortal; then there is the probability that they have ethereal bodies capable of visibility,

and the possibility that they may at times be visible to ourselves.

Of the vast mass of tradition existing on the subject it is unnecessary to speak. There is no century or country, no family, hardly any individual, where some traditions of the kind are not to be found. The most simple and rudimentary form of the supernatural appearance is the dream; 'for the dream is from Jove.' Every night of the year there are multitudes of us who see visions and dream dreams with a remarkable fidelity which no waking effort could achieve; all the old surroundings revive in marvellous detail; the form of him who, himself beloved, loved us, comes forth with gracious voice and benignant aspect. Now no doubt these dreams are mainly reminiscences, the revival of old scenes photographed for ever upon the brain. But we need not suppose that this phantasmagoric procession that sweeps through the chambers of the mind is altogether purposeless and unreal. Have none of us found the rush of revived affections, the solemn influence of the revival of old impressions, the coming forth from hidden rooms of the mind of matters that had altogether escaped our recollection,—'the burial places of memory give up their dead'? The *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* of theologians especially applies to ghost stories. There is a universal *consensus* in their favour. The mass of tradition is simply overwhelming. To treat the general instinct and conviction of mankind with contempt is both unhistorical and unphilosophical. The spiritual machinery of our greatest dramatists, the most stirring legends, yes, and some chapters of authentic history, must disappear if we reject the unwavering tradition. If the old proverb

is true that there is no smoke without fire, how are we to account for the uniform existence of the body of accepted tradition on the subject, without at least admitting the existence of a nucleus of truth? Many of our readers have read of Lord Lytton's *Scin Læca*, and there are various corresponding traditions in Norse and Scandinavian literature. I believe that the *Strange Story* embodied some of Bulwer Lytton's deepest convictions, not to say experiences. Talleyrand used to say that there was something wiser than the wisest person, more eloquent than the eloquent, more far-sighted than the shrewdest, and that was prevailing sentiment and public opinion. It is to the detecting and reproducing of this floating public opinion that the *Times* has owned its marvellous success. I do take the sentence as entirely true; for there have been times when the opinions of a Bacon or a Shakespeare or an Aristotle have been pretty well worth the thoughts of all other writers put together. But this universal feeling and constant abiding tradition has always been, with Lord Beaconsfield, 'on the side of the angels,' on the side of supernatural appearances.

Next, what is the amount of positive testimony, of evidence that will sustain cross-examination, that we have in favour of the popular theory? In our scientific day we can only proceed according to facts accurately stated and vigorously sifted. It is utterly unscientific to laugh the theory out of court, and to pooh-pooh all the witnesses. Science has only been able to make its sure advances by accepting facts, when shown to be facts, even of the most contrariant character, satisfied that they will be reconciled on a higher plane. If the evidence given on behalf of alleged supernatural occurrences

cannot be received, there is an end of such things as evidence on the one side and conviction on the other. Many an important litigation has been settled on less conclusive testimony than supports many an instance of apparition or second sight. What is especially remarkable is, that these ghost stories, as we may call them generically, instead of vanishing away in the increasing light of the nineteenth century, may almost be said to show an increasing frequency; at least there are increasing facilities in their becoming known. In the recent memoirs of Lady Georgiana Chatterton she mentions how, when she sat by the side of her dead mother, her soul was filled with a solemn gladness, and she was convinced that her mother's spirit was with her. She gives also some remarkable and authentic instances of second sight. I myself, within the range of my own personal knowledge, could give some remarkable instances of this kind. In recent cases, such as have happened within the last few years or months, there is generally an unconquerable and natural aversion on the part of the living to publishing details respecting their deceased relatives. Just to mention a few salient cases. No one can question either the good sense or good faith of John Wesley. He entertained the strongest belief in the supernatural, and his narrative of the weird occurrences at Epworth has always been accepted as authentic. I need only allude to the cycle of spiritualistic phenomena in connection with Swedenborg. There is a remarkable account of Richardson, in his northern voyages, finding the words written on a blank sheet of paper, 'Steer north;' and doing thus he saved a number of lives. There has been the dream about shipwrecked sailors which has led

to a boat being pushed off next day to neighbouring rocks, and there rescuing the sufferers just in time. Various cases of second sight stand upon indisputable authority. While residing at Cardiff I knew the case of a policeman stabbed by a butcher; the poor widow had seen the whole thing in a dream the night before. The remarkable instance of a gentleman in Cornwall seeing by second sight the assassination of Mr. Perceval in the lobby of the House of Commons is firmly established. But finally, to return to our friends the ghosts; and, indeed, I call them our friends, for, to quote pious old Ruddle (to whom a 'visible and suppliant ghost' foretold the Plague of London six months before), 'what pleasures and improvements do such deny themselves who scorn and avoid all opportunity of intercourse with souls separate, and the spirits glad and sorrowful, which inhabit the unseen world?' Take the historical ghost of 'the bad' Lord Lyttelton. This story has been lately told by two authors with great carefulness—the Rev. F. G. Lee and Mr. Percy Fitzgerald; and the late Lord Lyttelton, than whom a more honourable and able man never existed, devoted great pains to its thorough investigation. The pith of the story is that, three days before his death, he saw in his house, in Hill-street, Berkeley-square, a fluttering bird, and afterwards a woman appeared to him in white apparel, and said to him, 'Prepare to die; you will not exist three days.' The remarkable thing about this story is the number and variety of independent witnesses to the truth of the occurrence. The extraordinary story of the apparition of a member of the Hell-fire Club of one of the colleges at Oxford—in imitation of Wilkes's Club at Med-

menham Abbey—was related to the writer when an undergraduate at Oxford, and since then the evidence has been sifted and arranged. The figure of an undergraduate was seen scaling the college at the very moment when the man had fallen down in the midst of a drunken orgy. Of course many supernatural stories admit of a perfectly naturalistic interpretation. For instance, in that charming story of *Marmorne* (is it possible that it can have been written by the present Lord Lytton?) there is a man playing the ghost, who receives a bullet in his shoulder,

which leads to the discovery of a murderous conspiracy. Moreover, a very serious chapter might be written on cases of insanity or death caused by foolish people simulating the honours of ghostdom.

At all events we, sitting cozily over our Christmas hearth and telling our mutual ghost stories, fully indorse the expression that 'there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy;' and are resolved that we will not speak unsympathisingly or carelessly of the doctrine of apparitions.



MY CHRISTMAS FAIRY.

SEE her standing with crown and with sceptre,
Little queen of Love's kingdom to-night ;
Every heart will adore and accept her,
For love is her right.

A little head crownèd with berries ;
A little brow clouded with doubt ;
Little lips that are redder than cherries,
Too pretty to pout.

A little fay dressed for the fairies ;
A little court waiting without,
A court where no sin and no care is,
Your kingdom, no doubt.

Do you think of the part you are playing,
As you stand with that fair drooping head—
What thoughts through your little brain straying
Will live there unsaid ?

The wild wind is sweeping through cloudland ;
The firelight glows fervent and red ;
The white snow is weaving a shroud-band
For hours that are dead.

The joy-bells ring out through the night-air ;
The old King of Winter draws near ;
In the glow and the gleam of the light there :
His welcome you hear.

O lips that are sweeter than laughter,
Smile too at the Christmas King's birth ;
Let the shadows and sorrows come after
Our season of mirth.

Throw off those grave thoughts, little fairy ;
Give kisses and smiles for to-night ;
Or if of caresses you're chary,
Look on with delight.

There are hearts that may ache some hereafter
For the lustre that lives in your eyes,
And the red lips that break into laughter,
Or tremble with sighs.

But the spell of the young years that bind you
Is sacred and holy and sure ;
As we leave you, I would we might find you,
So gentle and pure.

RITA.



MY CHRISTMAS FAIRY.

See the Poem.



THE EVES OF TWO CHRISTMAS NUMBERS.

For some years I was sub-editor of the *Illustrated Social Review*. It is devoted to— But I will not stop to puff the *Review*, explain its scope, or describe its method. The completeness of my disinterestedness will be felt when I assure my reader that I have received all the money I ever earned of it; that there is no likelihood of my earning any more; and that in the week preceding Christmas last year I ceased to be connected with the paper.

In justice to myself I must say that my retirement was not caused by anything within the jurisdiction of my prudence or ability. I resigned; and I resigned because I was suffering from fierce nervous excitement, which, my doctor soothingly assured me, threatened either my life or my sanity; he could not say for certain which.

'If I resign,' said I to my doctor, 'I lose the majority of my income.'

'If you don't resign,' said he, in a tone that indicated his final opinion was in the words, 'you will go over to either the great majority—the dead—or the lesser majority, the majority of the living—the fools.'

I was not alone in the world. My people at home took an interest in me, and looked to me for house-keeping money; and I had been too long connected with the *Illustrated Social Review* not to have a well-defined notion of my duty as a social being; so I made up my mind (having some left still) to take my doctor's advice, and to live—and to live in sanity.

If there were any likelihood of my being able to resume my duties in six months, I have no doubt that the owner of the paper would have consented to accept the services of a substitute while I was recruiting my health; but the condition of the case did not allow of this.

'If,' said my doctor to me, earlier in the case than the period from which I last quoted words of his, 'you spend one more night in that office under any circumstances, I will not answer for the consequences; or rather I *will* answer for the consequences, and say that they must be disastrous.'

This decision had narrowed the question to two issues: Was the paper to seek a new office, or was I to seek a new paper? The reply was sadly obvious to me. I must go. True, the paper had changed from the old office to this new one only a week before; but that change had been owing to the expansion of the paper and the necessity for more extensive offices, and had had nothing whatever to do with the nerves of any one of the staff.

In the week preceding last Christmas twelve months a certain event took place. I shall now relate that event here.

The Christmas number of the *Illustrated Social Review* appeared each year the week before Christmas. It was not an 'extra number,' but the ordinary weekly issue swollen to about double the usual size. The literary matter of the Christmas number did not differ very largely from the literary

matter of the ordinary weekly part. There was usually a long story illustrating some striking social question, and this story formed the only literary innovation on a routine number. The chief attraction of the enlarged paper lay in its engravings, of which there were a double number, and its coloured plate, a feature peculiar to the Christmas number. As sub-editor it was my duty to read all proofs, see the paper 'made up' according to the instructions of my chief, and be present in the printing-office when the paper went to press. As soon as a perfect copy of the paper was brought to me by the foreman printer (in case it was all right), I initialled it, told the printer to 'Go on!' then my responsibility was at an end, and I took my way home.

We went to press on Thursday night each week. Sometimes I was able to get away from the office at ten o'clock; often I did not find myself in a position to initial the sheets until past midnight. The Christmas number being the most important of the year, I rarely could get away until two or three in the morning. My chief usually looked in at about ten o'clock just to see that all was in train, and then left me. On Thursday night, the week before Christmas 1876, the editor came at ten, we had a somewhat lengthened chat, he looked at the last proof-slips, and then left me to revise the pages and see the whole paper together and 'pulled' before I took my leave.

It was a quarter-past twelve o'clock when he and I shook hands, and he went slowly down the iron-edged stairs.

The printing-office was in a court off Fleet-street. In all the world there is no stiller place than one of these ghostly courts off Fleet-street, if the silence is not

broken by the tear and chatter of printing machinery.

Winchester-court at the time my chief left was resounding to the rattle of two dozen machines. The room I was sitting in trembled like a frightened horse, the glass in the window clattered, and the whole air seemed torn by waves and cross waves of jarring noises. In the basement of the house in which I sat three large machines were at work; on the ground floor four clanged and whirred; by my side on the first floor a gas-engine snorted, and shook its iron rack, and struggled like a chained wild-beast striving to escape; while a number of lithographic machines croaked and muttered all round me like a swarm of monster bullfrogs and a flight of gigantic mosquitoes.

This uproar of machinery all round made it necessary to speak loudly in order to make oneself heard. The tone of ordinary conversation would seem a hoarse indistinct whisper. No sound from the court outside could reach me, and no sound I could make would have any chance of reaching ears not within the four walls of my room.

Just before the editor left me the foreman printer had been down to take away some proofs and speak with the chief and myself. When the foreman was going away I had said to him,

'Well, Mr. Bain, when will you have anything more for me to look at?'

'Not for an hour, sir,' was his answer; so that when I found myself alone, I looked round the room to try and find something I might read. With a sigh I resigned myself to fate. There was nothing to read, nothing to do for an hour.

Although it was cold and raw and damp abroad, the room in

which I sat was bright and warm. Indeed it was almost too warm; the steam all around gave the place the close feeling of an oven. I had always noticed that after spending an hour or two in that room I felt as weak and weary as though I had sauntered all day through a strange city to meet some one who never came.

The room was not more than twelve feet by twelve. In the centre stood a shabby writing-table at which I sat, opposite me was the door ajar. A gas-jet burned on the landing without; no other door opened on that landing. Between the table and the door stood a chair; across the high window stretched a large deep desk, which filled up that whole side of the room; on my right-hand side, as I sat, stretched, from floor to ceiling, shelves upon which lay old wood-blocks and stereotypes of blocks. My table was jammed up against the shelf-case; into the room on my left side a press projected, leaving only about a foot and a half between the corner of the press and my table.

A particularly ill-used correspondent arose to my mind. There were pens, ink, and paper on the table. I took a sheet of paper and began a letter to him. I had just begun; I had written only these words, 'No doubt you have made up your mind that, as a final act of malicious unfriendliness, I gave instructions to those around me that my death should be concealed from you,' when some one knocked softly, very softly, at the door. Thinking it was a boy from the composing-room to ask a question, I said, 'Come in!' without raising my head.

Although my face was bent over the table, my eyes fixed on the paper, I was conscious that the door opened slowly, that the person who had knocked had not en-

tered, and that it was a man, not a boy, as I had at first imagined. I raised my eyes. A low-sized, square, powerful-looking man of about thirty-five stood with an air of great humility in the doorway, holding his hat in his right hand in front, and keeping his left hand behind him out in the landing.

Something about this man made me observe him very closely. At the time I did not know why his appearance claimed my attention so strongly. He was almost in tatters. His boots were open at the toes; his trousers jagged at the heels and between the ankles; his hat, a soft felt one, was without a lining and green with age. His coat and waistcoat were of a dingy yellowish tweed; the coat frayed at the wrists; all the buttons gone out of the waistcoat, which was secured by a piece of twine tied round the waist. From underneath a shabby yellow beard a dirty blue scarf fell, and occupied the whole open space of the waistcoat. His face was white and calm, the forehead being singularly white and well formed. The two most remarkable things about this man were his attitude and his eyes. The attitude was that of a fallen angel unprotesting against his fate; the eyes were those of a man aspiring to reach heaven by audacity.

'What can this man be? What does he want here?' were the questions I put to myself. 'I can't guess, and I don't like him,' were my mute replies. I was weak and low and nervous. I looked at the window—no chance of escape that way. I looked at the door—he barred it up completely, and one blow from such an arm as held his hat would dispose of me. I knew the outer door was open; I knew he was not a printer. I knew no one was likely to pass up or down that staircase for a long time. I

knew my voice might as well be buried six feet under ground as in that room, for all it would avail me to summon assistance. What had that man in his left hand? Why did he keep his hand so strangely behind his back? What did this man want with me? I had never seen him before.

'May I come in, sir?' asked the man, in a dull hoarse voice.

'Yes,' I answered. 'What can I do for you? Are you sure you have not mistaken the room?'

'You are the sub-editor of the *Illustrated Social Review*?' he asked, crossing the threshold, and taking the inner handle of the door in his right hand under the hat. While he stood thus sideways, he still kept the left hand pointed towards the passage, and out of my sight.

'Yes,' I answered again; and repeated, 'What can I do for you?'

'May I say a few words to you—in private?'

'I am quite alone.'

'May I shut the door? I don't want any one to see me here.'

I reviewed the case as swiftly as he spoke. If he had any harmful intention he could carry it out, in spite of me; he could bang the door that moment and spring on me. If he had no harmful intention it was indifferent to me whether the door was open or shut. Thus in either case I might as well assent. I merely nodded an affirmative.

Still keeping that left hand concealed from me, he shut the door, latched it carefully, and then turned the key! He stooped down near the door, deposited whatever he had in his hand on the ground, and approached the table. On the ground near the door I saw, when he moved a little aside, a large cup of tea, and in the saucer against the cup a large piece of bread.

A sharp pang of pity for this man went through me when I found what he had carried so cautiously and so secretly. I rose, went to the door, took up the cup and saucer, set them on the table, and, placing a chair for him, said,

'Sit down and take your tea while you talk to me. No one will want to come in here for an hour. Now what do you wish to say to me?'

He looked at me a while out of those strange eyes, in which for a moment the audacity was a little subdued. He drew a long breath, and then spoke:

'Although you see me as I am now, I am a man of good education. I have never been regularly connected with the editorial part of any paper, but I have had something to do with newspapers for some time. I am doing a little reading here now. I did not want those common printers to see me in here speaking to you. Common men are so common, aren't they?'

I looked away from the poor fellow's tattered coat and starred bold eyes, answering, 'Yes.'

'Common men are fearfully common. I was once in a poor-house, and I know. I didn't want these working printers, if they passed up or down, to see me talking to a gentleman; they make fun of me so. Do you know there is a conspiracy against me? Did you ever hear that?'

I looked back to him swiftly, and thought, 'The man is mad; the door is locked, and the yells of a Titan could reach no human ears! Heaven, be merciful to me, and compassionate towards those who depend upon me!' I said aloud, assuming a tone of sympathy, 'If I were you, I should not bother about those common men. Your tea is getting cold.'

Won't you drink it, and tell me what you want to see me about ?

He shook himself, and passed his hand quickly, nervously across his white forehead : shook himself again ; then he fixed his daring eyes on mine, and burst out suddenly and so rapidly that I could scarcely follow him :

' You are sub-editor of the *Illustrated Social Review* ; why don't you try and do something for the unfortunate ? You are sub-editor of the *Illustrated Social Review* ; why aren't you the friend of the mad ? Tell me that ! ' he shouted excitedly, thrusting his white face close to mine.

Was it my own fright or his breath that stirred in my hair ? My case seemed almost hopeless. The eyes, which were aspiring, had turned first audacious and then threatening. All he need do was to push that table violently upon me, jam me between it and the wall, seize me by my shoulders, spring upon the table, and beat out my brains against the wall. I was utterly dazed, basilisked, by those fierce eyes set in that immobile white face. Already I fancied his hand at my throat, felt the first dull, sickening, darkening, deadening crash of my skull against that wall behind me.

For a moment a vision of my home floated between me and the pallid stark face of the maniac. I saw my wife and my little ones stretching their arms out to me across an impassable gulf. I saw the agonies of ruin and despair and woe distraught for loss of love sweep over the face of my wife. I heard the shrill cries of my round-cheeked children as I sank for ever from their view. As I dipped below the verge of love and memory, I called out aloud, ' My darlings, my darlings, good-bye ! '

Swiftly the vision passed. Suddenly the attitude of the man

altered. He shivered and drew back from me, stood up, shivered again. Then, covering his face with his hand for a moment, he remained immovable. In a few seconds his chest and shoulders began to heave, and I could hear him sob. Through his sobs he spoke : ' My darlings, my darlings, good-bye ! They did not let me say good-bye to you. They pounced upon me in the middle of the night, and carried me off and locked me up for three whole years, and when I came out, all my darlings were dead.'

His arms fell to his side, as though he were shot through the heart. He threw up his white face, clenched his fists, and buried one under the breast of the mean waistcoat ; then, raising his other hand clenched to heaven, he shouted, ' He took my wife and my children from me ! He killed them when I was locked up—he, John Kempston, did it ; and, by the Maker of us two, John Kempston and me, I'll leave that in his heart some night ! '

With an action so swift that I could not follow it, he plucked his hand out of his waistcoat ; I saw something glitter above my head ; and before I had time even to feel dread, the point of a long bowie-knife was buried an inch in the table, and the haft trembling between his face and mine.

He put his two hands on the table, leaned down, and glared at the trembling blade. He snored and shook with a heavy tremor.

A knock at the door. A second knock. The handle of the door turned. The man roused himself, looked round the room very slowly. ' Say wait a moment ! ' he whispered to me.

' Wait a moment ! '

He worked the knife out of the table quickly, shut it up, and slipped it inside his waistcoat.

Then, taking up his cup and saucer, he whispered, 'It's one of those common men. I'll tell him a lie to account for the door being locked; and you can stick to the lie.' He opened the door, turned to the foreman printer and said, touching his mean waistcoat, 'I was showing this gentleman my invention for soothing pain; and as I haven't taken out a patent for it yet, he was kind enough to suggest my locking the door. Are there any rough pulls waiting, sir?'

It was many days before I regained my customary peace and balance of mind after that disturbing night; and even when I had got back my usual tone in daylight, my nights were very trying for a long time.

I had always been nervous and imaginative; and it was a source of wonder to those who knew me well, and to myself, that I so rapidly recovered from the shock. But for months my nights were bad. If I sat up last at home, as I often was obliged to do, I dreaded to leave the room and the gaslight in which I sat. If a door opened or a mouse ran across the ceiling, I looked up with a start, sure I should see the rigid white face, the madman's blazing eye, the sharp flash of glittering brightness through the air; and then I felt the blade between my shoulders—not in the table, but between my shoulders—with the whole of the madman's weight pressing down upon the weapon.

My dreams were even still more trying. One in particular absolutely shattered me; and when I awoke after it I lay trembling, sleepless, amazed with terror for hours.

In this dream I was sitting with my children and my wife, in the shade of a fine sycamore-tree that stood at the top of a low hill. My wife was standing in front of me,

all smiles and happiness; my little ones romping about in the grass. Suddenly the expression of my wife's countenance changed. Her face became distorted with a hideous dread, her eyes fixed on a spot behind my back. I could not move, I could not turn my head, I could not see the spectacle which fascinated her horror; but I knew what it was, and I suffered the pains of a thousand deaths in my helplessness to move, my inability to see the monster, and the unspeakable agony of sympathy in my wife's frozen unredeemable fear. Would not some blessed messenger of kindly fate kill her, and put her out of this awful unrealised certainty?

Meanwhile I heard him crawling up behind me. I knew he was only a few feet off. He drew nearer, and I could feel the stirring of the grass I sat on as his feet went through it. I could feel his warm breath upon my neck, and yet he did not strike. I looked at my wife, and felt an aching between my shoulders for that blow. Great Heavens, why did he not strike me, strike her—anything at all to shatter this hideous spell, and take me out of this bitterness of looking at that face so frozen and so dear! Kill us, O Death! With us, O Heaven, and deliver us from this suspended rending of the spirit!

Suddenly the cloudless sky of noon grew dark and became convulsed, the thunders rent it open, and, looking up, I saw the vault of heaven formed of prodigious black jagged rocks that swung and whirled towards the west, while a sound as of ten thousand thunderstorms shouted above the prodigious ruin.

In the tumult the muscles of my limbs were loosed. I sprang up and turned upon him, wrenched the knife from his clutch, and drove it home into his heart.

Presently the ruin of the heavens was complete, and all became still. A colourless void stretched above me, and in the middle of this void hung a broad green moon, the light of which was a plague of reproaches to the soul. This great broad moon hung motionless in space. This light and this moon wore the expression of eternal wrath, and I was destined to dwell for ever beneath that loathsome luminary, bathed in that corroding light!

I looked at my feet. Not a man! Whom had I slain, that my fate should be so incommunicably terrible?

The light of the moon grew stronger, and by it now I saw half of the knife rising out of the bosom of—my wife!

I had slain my wife, and for ever and for ever I was to sit under that obscene moon, contaminated by that degrading light, and gaze upon the death-agony of my slaughtered innocent! God of all mercies, is not this too much!

And with yells I awoke, to rush about the room and jabber like a fool, and find rest in no attitude but on my knees.

I wonder I did not go mad. The brains of many men have been turned by less. After that memorable Thursday night I often debated with myself whether I should take any steps against the man who had so terrified me. But in reality he had neither done anything to me nor threatened me. I made inquiries, and found that his name was William Dee; that he had been in a lunatic asylum for three years, during which time his wife and two children died; and that about a year ago he had been discharged as cured. He was regarded as 'odd,' 'strange,' 'touched;' but every one to whom I spoke looked on him as perfectly harmless.

The form of his craze was peculiar, almost unique; he was mad about madness itself. Any allusion to insanity threw his mind at once off its balance. He had first shown symptoms of insanity about five years before. Its earliest form was a delusion that every dwelling-house he entered had a mad-house attached to it, in which were confined members of the family afflicted with mental malady. The aggravated form of this delusion followed; and then he fancied that not only had every private house its own private madhouse, but that the inmates of the latter were cruelly and basely ill-treated. Then he commenced to preach a crusade against these private lunatic asylums. He failed to attract any followers. He essayed the deliverance of the captives himself, and selected for the first attempt the house of Mr. John Kempston of Long Acre. Mr. Kempston called in the police and handed William Dee over to them. The police sent him to the parish, and the parish to Colney Hatch. His belief that Mr. Kempston stopped him at the outset of his great career, and that Mr. Kempston was personally the whole cause of his having been locked up, made him in his moments of excitement swear undying hatred and thirst of revenge against that man, who, however, was quite beyond the reach of Dee's anger, as he had emigrated to New Zealand soon after the unhappy Dee was first confined. It was only in the great pressure of business in the week before Christmas that Dee got employment at our printing-office. The week after Christmas he was gone, so that my chance of any more trouble from him was slight indeed.

In December next year the *Illustrated Social Review* changed publication office and printing-

office. The printing-office was now in Deerhound-court, Fleet-street. As Christmas approached, the Christmas of 1877, I was too busy to give much thought to my health. Several friends had remarked that I looked thin and worn. But I explained this to myself and them by saying I was greatly overworked; for not only had I then the ordinary work of our own paper, and the preparation of the Christmas number, but I had been employed to edit and write a good deal for a trade annual, and I was greatly worn down altogether. It is a strange thing that, although I then looked upon myself as completely recovered from the effect of the events which occurred the Thursday night preceding Christmas 1876, I never ran low physically from any cause without more or less suffering a relapse into the wretched state of nervous timidity which followed immediately upon the shock a year ago.

As in the former printing-office, we had an editorial room in the new one. It was, however, situated differently. In the old office it had been on the first floor. Here it was on the third, being the highest but the attic. It was a long narrow room. At one end a window looked into the silent deserted court. At the other end was the stair to the upper floor, not partitioned off from the room. My table stood in the window, and about twenty feet from the head of the staircase leading down through the stair-well, also not partitioned off. Although I call this the editorial room, of course we had another and much better room at the publishing-office; but the one at the printing-office was the real one for hard work, and all the night-work had to be done here, in order that I might be handy to the printers. The proprietors of

the *Review* had signed a twelve months' contract with our new printer, and the use of this room was part of the contract. Indeed, we could get no other room in the house; and high and bleak as it was we were glad to secure it.

The floor below was the printer's counting-house, shut up for the night; the floor above, an attic lumber-room.

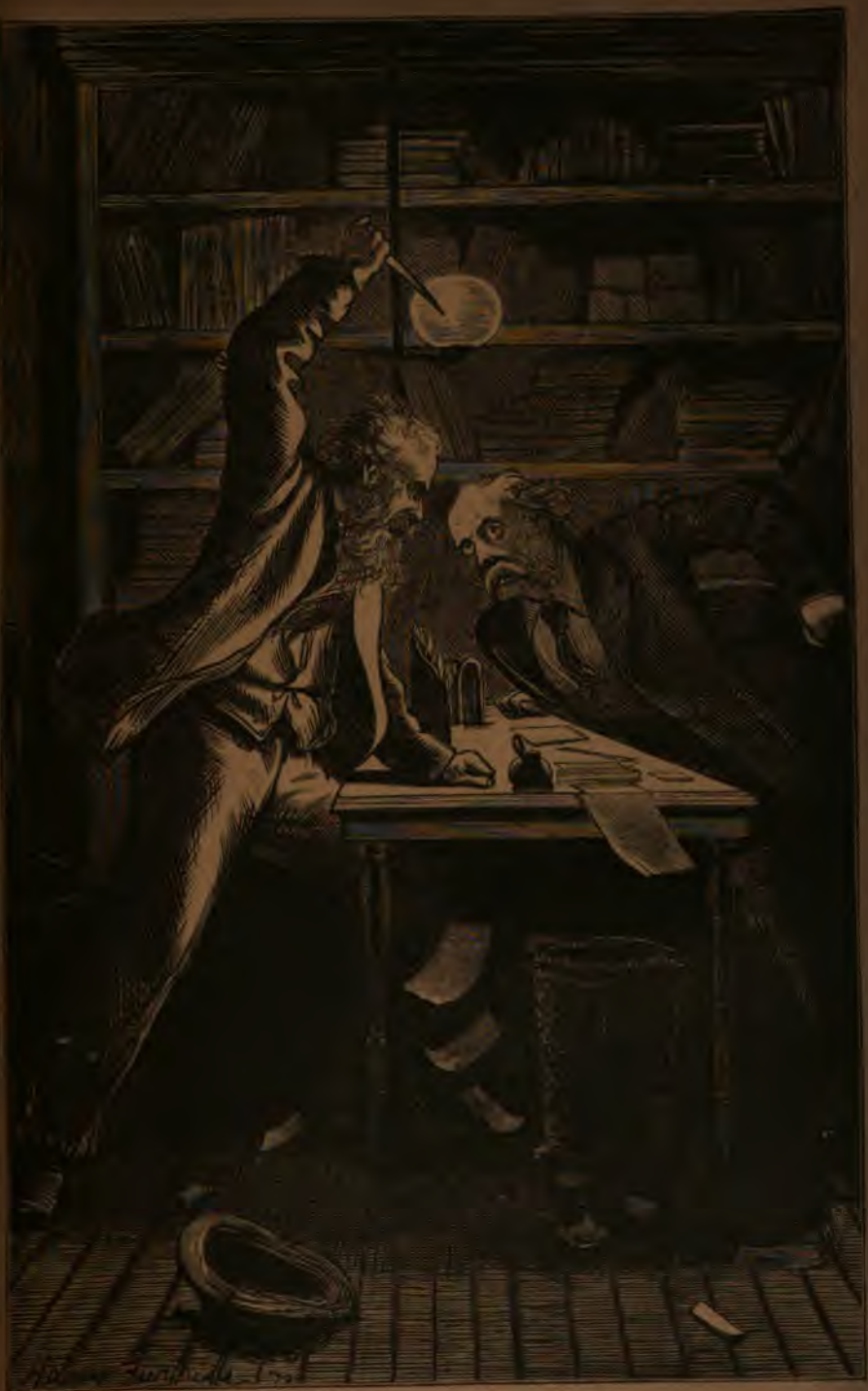
We were much more forward with the work this year than we had been last. On Thursday night before Christmas week 1877, the editor went away at ten o'clock, leaving me in charge. 'You'll be able to get off at about twelve,' said he, as he tied his muffler round his neck at the top of the unprotected stair-well. While he was descending I heard a clock strike ten. I shouted to him to send up the foreman. He answered, 'All right!' and for the first time I was alone by night in the new office.

The room was in strong contrast, and the surroundings in stronger contrast, to the room and surroundings of that day twelve months. The chamber was long and bleak, and an oppressive silence filled the court. In the basement of this house the machines groaned and muttered; but the sound was deadened and afar off: it seemed to desire to conceal itself from notice. I felt I should like to have had a dog or a child with me. It was very lonely up there; very dreary and lonely up there, away from every one.

At last I heard a foot ascending the stairs, and in a few moments the hard features of the foreman rose above the level of the floor.

He came in, and we had a short chat about the work. As he was going, he said, with a grin, while he wiped his hands in his apron, 'You're quiet enough up here, sir. There's not more row here





'I saw something glitter above my head.'

See 'The Eyes of Two Christmas Numbers.'



now than under the dome of St. Paul's at this moment.'

'When shall I have the proofs of the pages up?' I asked.

'I'll send you up two or three in half an hour,' said the foreman, as he disappeared down the stairs.

Once more I was alone in that long narrow room. I had nothing to do for half an hour.

'As quiet as under the dome of St. Paul's at this moment,' I thought, adopting the notion of the foreman. 'The grave is not so quiet as the vast chill concave of that dome now,' I followed on, indulging my imagination.

There was only one gas-jet in the room, and that was on my table, so that the end of the room near the stair-well was in comparative darkness. I stared down into the dimness, and continued, following up the idea the foreman had started,

'What silence, what abysses of silence there are in that great chasm of darkness, the inexplorable dome! For no earthly consideration would I sit on one of those chairs now, with my back to all the echoing voices and ghastly tomb-encrusted walls.'

I felt myself shiver, and cast down my eyes for a while to steady my thought. I strove to drive the idea from me; but it had seized firm hold of my imagination, and would not go.

'For no prospect of all this world's happiness would I go into that awful Whispering Gallery at this awful hour. Fancy sitting with your ear to that cold vocal wall, and gathering the insinuated murmur of words too terrible for daylight, too tremendous for human lips. Fancy half hearing and half losing the sounds of such words, and half gaining and half missing their prodigious meaning. Fancy one's poor dumb crushed-up soul clinging to these portentous walls,

and trembling upon the brink of a revelation so overwhelming that the systems of the suns could not hear it uttered, and endure.'

The cold sweat now fell down my forehead.

I raised my eyes, and saw ascending by the stairway through the ceiling the legs of a man!

At that sight the last resources of my physical powers failed. I could not stir, to save my life. I had no desire to stir. I felt numbed and deadened, and sustained in consciousness by only one desire, a supreme curiosity. What was going to happen? Who had gone through the ceiling? What would he do presently? Would there be a fierce explosion suddenly, a rending of this accursed house from roof to cellar, and a wild dispersion of its rotting beams and mouldered bricks? Or would a thin ribbon of smoke fall slowly from that square space of darkness above, and wriggle along the ceiling towards me, towards nothing, to be followed and devoured by a hissing snake of flame?

I heard a scratching sound; then the blank darkness fell away from the head of the stairs like a veil, and I could see up, could see the hideous unplastered rafters and the loathsome sly cobwebs, and upon the rafters and among the cobwebs the distorted shadow of a man.

If the chair on which I sat had begun slowly rising towards the ceiling, and my only chance of avoiding being crushed to death was to stand up off that chair, I could not have done it. To save my life I could not take my eyes off that awful opening and the unintelligible motions of the appalling shadow; for if once I took my eyes off that place, that chasm of stifling vacuity, how could I turn my eyes back on it again, how could I dare to uplift my eyes to

that gaping mouth of horrors? If I did so look away and so look up, what should I see? What supreme spectacle would be revealed to me? Or, worse than that, worse than anything else, perhaps all would be dark again, as though the blind darkness, the voracious maw of slimy quietness, had absorbed him who ventured within the suffocating breath of its noisome depths.

I do not know how long I remained thus spellbound, but it must have been more than a quarter of an hour. All that time the shadow of the man was ceaselessly moving hither and thither, up and down. Now the arms seemed bare and full of vital vigour, now clad and limp and helpless. Now the reflection, broken by the rafters and distorted by the cobwebs, was that of a pair of naked legs, now of legs loosely robed and supple.

At last it became plain that there were two figures in the loft.

I could now make out that the partly nude figure had on nothing but a shirt; this was the active figure. The other lay apparently on the ground close to the candle, and never stirred save when moved by the other. What could all this mean? There was no sound of a struggle. There had been no sound of a struggle. Had the corpse—yes, there was no use in disguising the matter from my fears—had the corpse been in that loft before that figure had disappeared up that ladder, or had the body been borne through this room on shoulders belonging to the legs I had seen? Was that body now cold with the revolting coldness of a death-stab a month old, or warm with the smile of life still upon its lips, the bloom of life still upon its cheeks?

Just then the stillness of this upper place was broken by a yell of enraptured rage. I saw a flash of keen cool light dash among the rafters, and then I saw the sha-

dow of the naked arm spring aloft with something long and sharp-pointed in the hand. Presently this swept down to the accompaniment of a scream of hate. I heard the blade tear through and through, and bite deep into the plank. I watched to see the first red trickle through the cracked ceiling; for now the body was that of no dead man, but of one drugged, or stunned by other means.

I had lost all thought of my own personality now. I may say I had no longer any feeling of being present at this scene. I was no more than a pair of eyes that could not turn away from this square opening, and an intelligence swallowed up in the passionless contemplation of what the eyes revealed.

Here the light in the loft went out. But I heard other blows struck in the dark. At last the blows ceased, and I heard a sound as of some body dragged across the floor.

Two legs fell partly down through the trap-door—legs wanting the feet! Then the body and the limp powerless arms.

My eyes never moved, no sound escaped me even when the acme of horror was reached, and I saw a bare left arm buried in the bosom of the figure, and a bare right arm whirled aloft and strike the bosom with a knife, and then, as the two figures rolled down the stairs into the room, saw that the trunk was headless!

The semi-nude man sprang to his feet, once more raised the blade above his head, and stepping back a pace from the prostrate figure, yelled, 'Take your death of me, John Kempston!' As he uttered the last word he tripped in something, staggered back, and disappeared. I heard him strike the balustrade, and fall to the flagged bottom of the stair-well. Then all was still.

When they took up the dead body of William Dee from the flags at the bottom of the stairs, they found nothing on it but a shirt. The rest of his clothes he had formed into an effigy upon which to wreak the vengeance he nourished against John Kempston. As in the last year in the old office, so in the present year at the new, he had got a job as extra proof-reader, with permission to sleep in the loft. His work was done, and he received a little money at nine

o'clock. It was supposed he drank, and that the drink overcame his slight stock of reason, and betrayed him into the violence which led to his death.

They found me insensible, with my head bowed on the table. I have not even yet recovered fully. I have been asked to write my story for the Christmas Number of *London Society*, and I thought that I might well recount my strange experience of the Eves of Two Christmas Numbers.

GHOSTS.

CREATURES of mist, half credited ;
 Our faint form flings
 No shadow in moonlight on the bed
 We visit ; noiseless is our tread,
 Who come from deserts of the dead,
 Where no bird sings.

For ever, in dark and cold forlorn,
 We wander there ;
 Pale spectres, wondrous pale and worn,
 As privet flowers at even shorn
 Are pale when Phosphor fails with morn,
 We who once were.

Who now nor see the sunny day,
 Nor waving wheat
 Hear whisper in its autumn play ;
 The sweet world's face is never gay
 For us, who see no flowers of May ;
 But night is sweet.

Night brings us back to earth again,
 Again we fill
 Our old familiar homes, a train
 Of dead men out of mind, who fain
 To be remembered, long, in vain,
 To linger still.

In vain. Dawn's hated herald shows
 Dawn comes apace.
 On the orient heaven ere Morning throws
 Broadcast her buds of white and rose,
 Each sad unwilling phantom goes
 To its own place.

Ah, why are these, when we appear,
 Our children, frayed ?
 Could they once feel how very dear
 We find their faces, none would fear
 Us, so far distant, yet so near,
 Dim folk of shade.

Do these not know their children's toys,
 Long years ago,
 Were ours ; their lovers' woes and joys,
 Their prayers, their faith, their fame, their noise
 Know they not this, these girls and boys,
 Nor care to know ?

As sights, which memory endears,
 Seen once more, please ;
 As sounds, unheard for many years,
 Heard once more waken joys and tears,—
 So are we moved by hopes and fears
 And cares of these.

Oft at their births we intervene ;
 The stray ears strown
 In their loves' harvest-home we glean
 And garner ; in their deaths we lean
 Over them, kindred shadows seen
 By them alone.

Would we might help them, though abhorred,
 From harm and wrong !
 From plague and famine, fire and sword,
 In weal and woe, at bed and board,
 Would our weak hands might work to ward
 Their whole life long !

Would we might say the things we know,
 A little say
 Of all the gods conceal ! But, lo,
 Our very dumb lips bid men go
 Eat bread, and let the wine's blood flow
 While it is day.

Bid them, while yet they see the light,
Ere the black pall
Cover them, let their robes be white,
Perfumed their heads in death's despite :
We know what wisdom is in night,
What end for all.

We watch the moon's far choral band
Fade in the blue ;
We watch the sinking grains of sand,
And yearn for voices to command,
' Do with your might what deed your hand
May find to do.'

We watch the unheeded hours, which yet
Return no more ;
We watch them wane with long regret.
Ye fools ! what meed have faces met
With fasting gaunt, with weeping wet,
Sealed up in store ?

Warm tender hands with last touch close
The dead's dull eyes ;
For ever from you to us he goes,
To our waste land where no wind blows.
Whither beyond ? What wise man knows,
However wise ?

Tossed for a while in life's mad foam,
A bubble at best,
His body lies long wrapped in loam ;
With us his weary ghost must roam
Always : men call it going home
To perfect rest.

Home ! rest ! words laughed by us to scorn.
Is, then, rest there
Indeed ? But we away are torn :
We see the glowworm's glimmer born,
We smell the mild sweet breath of morn,
And mix with air.

J. M.

DICK ALLEN'S MERRY CHRISTMAS.

It was about ten o'clock on the night of Christmas-eve—a good many years ago now—that Dick Allen gave his name at the gate of 'Old Trinity' College, Dublin, and passed in. As he looked in at the lodge-door, he felt a strong temptation to sit for a while with the two burly good-natured-looking night-porters by their roaring fire; for the night was bitterly cold, and he felt more thoroughly alone than he ever had before in the two-and-twenty years of his life. However, there were other feelings in Dick's mind at the time that counter-balanced his sense of loneliness; so he merely replied to the porters' kindly 'Good-night, sir,' and passed on to his rooms in 'Botany Bay.' Once within his rooms he lost no time in striking a light, and then set to work to rekindle his smouldering fire. The prospect that the candle revealed was far from cheerful. The room was carpetless, and, except for a table, one armchair, and two or three dilapidated cane-chairs, almost naked of furniture. And yet they had not the look of the apartments of a hard-reading sizar, who had neither means nor desire for any decoration beyond what was absolutely necessary: the nails were there in the walls, but the pictures were gone; that handsome armchair and massive table had never been put in by themselves. Where was the rest of the furniture? Everything betokened a recent and rapid fall in the fortunes of the tenant. He, however, had now at last succeeded in rousing into a show of animation the dying embers; and after warming his hands for a few minutes over

the blaze, he got up, and, producing a bottle of whisky from his pantry, mixed a glass of 'grog,' and then, throwing himself into the armchair, fell a-thinking.

A perfect stranger to Dick and his story would easily have guessed that the thoughts which were bringing such a weary look of almost hopeless wretchedness upon that handsome young face were not over-pleasant ones. Sad enough in all conscience they were, and not without reason. It was now some six months since Dick had fallen out with his father, between whom and himself there had always existed the strongest affection. What was the original cause of quarrel is immaterial. Some trifle, occurring at an inopportune moment, had set at variance two proud and wilful, though loving, hearts. Hot and bitter words had been spoken on both sides. The very closeness of the bond which had united them before seemed to make the breach more irremediable; and Dick Allen had left his home one night in the summer vacation, refusing all offers of assistance from his father, and determined for the future to hold no communication with him. He had never known what it was to want money, and consequently thought that nothing was easier than to get it; so while the remainder of his last quarter's allowance lasted, he lived pleasantly enough at his rooms in college, always on the look-out for some means of making money, but not yet considering the search as very pressing or necessary. In fact, he was quite satisfied in his own mind that to a clever fellow—as he un-

doubtedly was—anything like an approach to want was an impossibility. When his money, however, began to disappear, it occurred to him that his manner of looking for work had perhaps been scarcely energetic enough, and so he determined to set about making a livelihood without further delay.

It would be going over again a thrice-told tale to relate the rebuffs and disappointments that he met at every step; how he gradually almost lost faith in himself from repeated failure; how he tried to obtain employment in one way after another, and at last began to think that there was no way whatever open to him. The fact was that poor Dick, though clever enough, had yet never had the training in the school of poverty which would have enabled him to turn his talents to immediate account. He tried to get a position as under-master in a school; but found that his having obtained no collegiate distinctions (which Dick, indeed, had always considered rather as the exclusive privilege of poor men) was an insuperable barrier. He tried journalism; but found the market already overstocked, and numbers of men with as much brains as himself, and ten times as much technical skill, applying for every vacancy. He had had, it is true, one or two transient gleams of success; but they had done him almost more harm than good, as they diverted him from the now all-important search for some occupation comparatively permanent.

One result of his ill-success in this struggle for a livelihood was that he was gradually compelled to drop the society of his former companions; for Dick was far too proud to accept the assistance many of them would have been glad to give him, and he could not bear to live amongst them in his

present altered circumstances. Hence it was that for some months he had lived almost alone. But about a month before the Christmas-eve on which we have seen him, he had fallen in with a set of men whom he had formerly avoided almost with contempt, but to whom he was now attracted by a kind of sympathy. They were almost all clever men and all dissipated men—a wild reckless set, nearly every one of them knowing that he had by his own deeds blighted the prospects of a promising life—utterly careless of the future if only they had to-day the means of drowning the remembrance of yesterday. Once amongst them, Dick had soon given up all effort, as he had before almost given up all hope, to obtain anything like a respectable and permanent position. They lived a strange, disreputable, hand-to-mouth life, getting ‘tick’ wherever there was a chance; ‘backing’ one another’s bills when any one would accept them; sometimes, though not often, making a few pounds in some honourable way. Poor Allen soon lost any delicacy he had had before regarding a resort to the pawnshop; and his furniture and most of his wardrobe had gone very rapidly to supply means for the constant round of dissipation in which he lived, and which had left its mark on his pale, though still handsome and well-bred, face.

Yet through all the stages of poor Dick’s downward career, he had always one restraining influence upon him which, though at times almost unheeded, never quite left him. This was the affection he had for his younger sister—as he called her, ‘little Kate.’ Squire Allen had been twice married. By his first wife he had three children—a son and heir, now abroad with his regiment in India, and two daughters, both of them married

for some years before the period of my story. By his second wife he had our hero Dick and one daughter, four years younger than Dick. On these, his youngest children, the Squire's whole affection had been concentrated. Their mother had died a couple of years after Kate's birth; and hence it happened that she and Dick had clung to one another from childhood as children early deprived of a mother's care often do. After the quarrel with his father, Dick had regularly corresponded with her, and, knowing her anxiety about him, he had sent her glowing accounts of success and prosperity, which, I fear, must often have seemed to himself a dismal mockery as he contrasted them with the actual disappointment that was wearing him down. Kate believed enthusiastically in her brother's talents, and so was the more easily imposed upon; and it was a great comfort to the good-hearted old Squire to know from her that the son whom he was as fond of as ever was at least not in any difficulty. As to an ultimate reconciliation, the older and wiser man deemed it merely a question of time.

The day before this Christmas-eve, however, Dick had seen the last of his late companions leave Dublin for the Christmas, and had returned to his solitary rooms perfectly desolate; he had felt very ill for some days, and utterly dispirited. It had suddenly occurred to him that Christmas-eve would be Kate's eighteenth birthday, and knowing she would wish to hear from him on that day, he had sat down to write. After a vain effort to control himself and tell the usual tale of success and happiness, the poor fellow had utterly broken down, and in a few almost incoherent sentences told how ill he felt and how hopeless

his condition was, and implored Kate to write to him at once, as he did not know how soon it might all end; but it could not last much longer. This he had hurriedly posted, almost careless as to the effect it might have; but now, as he sat gloomily thinking in his armchair, he could not help feeling bitter disappointment that he had had no reply. He got up, and paced up and down the room.

'She might have telegraphed,' he said aloud; 'she might even have come up to see me. Though how could she,' he said, a moment after, 'while she's entertaining a lot of people at home? But she might at least have telegraphed. Good God, if she'd written to me like that, nothing would have kept me from her!'

These reflections added to the bitterness of poor Dick's feelings; for a few minutes more he walked up and down with irresolute steps, then suddenly stopped for a moment, as it were to collect himself, took a bottle from his breast-pocket, and setting it down on the table, brought a wine-glass from the pantry. 'As well do it now as at another time,' thought poor Allen, as he held the glass up to the light and began pouring the laudanum into it drop by drop. He had counted about thirty drops, when suddenly he heard the first clang of the bells commencing the Christmas chimes. Somehow the sound compelled him to stop and listen, and he laid down the bottle and glass. Then, as he listened, he could not help going over in memory the many times when, on this night of the year, he had stood in his father's house, with his sister by him, and wished her many a happy birthday; and he thought of what that sister's feelings would be were she to hear next morning that he had died a suicide. Thus



'She shut the door, and said, "O Squire, read that!"'

See 'Dick Allen's Merry Christmas.'



he stood thinking until the chimes had ceased; and then, softened and more calm, he turned to the table, and said to himself, 'Not on this night, at any rate. To-morrow I may be able to do it, so that no one may know how I died.' Then it struck him that the laudanum he had already poured out would at least procure him what he seldom enjoyed now—sound sleep; so, filling up the wine-glass with water, he sat down again by the fire, and in a few minutes was fast asleep.

Now while poor wayworn Dick was heavily sleeping under the influence of that gentle poison, laudanum, events were transpiring far away that strangely influenced his fate. In the great old drawing room of Allentown was assembled a large and merry party. The house was always at that season full of visitors, and as many relations and friends were gathered together as could find room. The centre of attraction on this her birthday was of course Kate, who was, indeed, at all times the favourite with everybody, from the warm-hearted but hasty old squire, down to the raggedest 'gosssoon' that hung about Allentown. Yet somehow this night she was not in her usual spirits; she could not help thinking often and anxiously of the brother whose place was vacant, and who seemed almost cut off from her for ever. An accident too had happened in the morning, which, although treated as a jest by most of the guests, had rendered Kate more than usually anxious. The boy who had gone in the morning for the post had taken an early opportunity of drinking Miss Kate's health; and it was only after a strict search that he was found, in the middle of the day, at his old grandmother's cottage with a broken head, and, as the old cook said to Kate, 'spache-

less wid the dhrink.' Speechless or not, he had been utterly unable to indicate the whereabouts of the postbag, and the only course was to wait patiently till he slept his drunkenness off, and might be able to remember. Kate had been much disappointed, for she was sure Dick would have written for her birthday, and in spite of his jovial letters her woman's wit had begun of late to suspect something wrong. Just as they were 'drinking in' the Christmas morning, word had been brought that the truant postboy had at length recovered consciousness, and was leading a party in search of the missing bag, so that the letters might be expected any moment. They waited, however, a good while longer, laughing and talking round the fire; but at last, sure enough, in came the old butler with the letters. Kate had a whole bundle of them, amongst which she saw in a moment one with Dick's well-known handwriting. After reading for a few moments she suddenly turned deadly pale, and almost fainted. Restraining herself, however, like a brave girl as she was, she made some excuse for leaving the room, and rushed to the Squire's sanctum, where she knew he had just gone. She shut the door and said,

'O Squire, read that!' putting into his hands poor Dick's broken-hearted scrawl.

The Squire read, and gasped out, 'Good God! My poor boy, my poor boy! What is to be done? If I had only known!'

The father and daughter stood for a few moments, as it were, overcome with a great feeling of powerlessness to avert the calamity that was evidently foreshadowed in the letter. Suddenly the same thought struck both, and they looked at the clock.

'O father,' cried Kate, 'couldn't

we stop the night-mail at Knock-rath? They'll do it for you.'

'God help us,' said the Squire; 'the mail passes at five minutes to two, and it's more than half-past one already. Stay, though,' he added, after a moment; 'there's just a chance.'

He opened the door, and went at once into the kitchen, followed by Kate.

'Quick,' said the Squire to the servants, who were all at high-jinks, 'some of you fetch Jim Cassidy!'

In a minute in came Jim, a fine specimen of a young Irishman, the rough-rider and trainer of the establishment, who had carried the Squire's colours to victory on more than one steeplechase course.

'Jim,' said the Squire, 'I want you to ride for your life to Knock-rath, and tell the station-master from me to stop the up-mail and keep it a few minutes; we'll be after you! Look alive, man; you've seven miles to go, and scarcely twenty minutes to do it in! Take Saucy Kate; she's about the fastest.'

'Is it the chaser—' Jim was beginning, in anything but a satisfied tone, when Kate said,

'O Jim, it's for me; and do ride fast!'

'For you, miss!' cried Jim. 'Then, bedad, if the gray mare doesn't put her best leg foremost, you may say I'm no horseman.'

In a minute or two the gray mare was at the back door, and Jim Cassidy booted and spurred, and in the saddle; then, with good wishes from all, he was off, taking the mare down the back avenue at a steady canter. A few seconds more and he had passed the gate, and the listeners could tell by the rapid thud of the hoofs that Jim was sending Saucy Kate along towards Knockrath at a rate few men would have cared to ride on that dark road in the wild night.

In an almost incredibly short space of time (though it seemed long enough to Kate) the mail-phaeton was brought round, and Kate, muffled up to her eyes in furs and with a driving-cloak of her father's outside of all, was seated in it, and in a moment more the Squire was driving as if he meant to overtake Jim on the gray steeplechaser. Suffice it to say Jim did his work like a man; got up just in time to have the signals set for stopping the train; and after a few minutes' delay the train was off again to Dublin, carrying Kate and the Squire on their errand of love.

While they are coming to him as fast as steam can bring them, let us take our story-teller's privilege and fly swifter even than that to poor Dick's cheerless chamber. There he lay sleeping peacefully, heedless of the bitter cold and the fast-expiring fire, heedless of the miseries of yesterday, heedless of the certain awakening to the miseries of to-morrow. And so hour after hour of the night passed on; and now it is five o'clock, and the college-gates are opened to let the servants in, and they bustle about and make a feeble show of life in the dark quadrangles. Another hour passes, and Dick still sleeps on; and the mail has reached Dublin, and Kate and his father are hastening to him through the gloomy streets. But gradually, under the restoring power of sleep, the careworn look has faded from the lad's face; and now, as he is nearing the waking hour, he begins to dream. He dreams that he is going home for the Christmas as he used to go. He gets out at the well-known station; there is old Tom Ryan waiting for him with the dog-cart. Now he is up and has the reins in his hands, and they are off along the old road to Allenstown; and Tom is explaining to him that 'Miss Kate would

have come to meet him, but has to entertain the people on her birthday; but sure he'll be home in time for lunch.' And now, with the speed of a dream, he is within the Allens-town gates and dashing up the avenue. A moment more and he is in the hall, and there are his father and Kate— But what is this? The sleeper is dimly conscious of some break in his dream; there is a moment of vague bewildering effort to awake; and then Dick, struggling to sit up, finds his hand clasped in his father's, and hears the well-known voice, 'My poor Dick, my poor Dick!' And then a muffled figure comes to the front, and before Dick

is well awake he is in Kate's arms. When he was fully awake and realised the whole scene, he fairly broke down and burst into tears; and there was a queer huskiness in the Squire's voice (he had seen the landanum bottle on the table) as he said, 'Dick, old fellow, we've both been hasty; but we'll say no more about that. Come along; there'll be just time to get some breakfast at the Gresham, and then we'll catch the 8.30, and be at home for luncheon.' And so Dick was in time for luncheon, and spent a fairly merry Christmas; and I have never heard that Kate caught any cold or other ailment from her midnight trip to Dublin.

JOE'S BESPEAK:

A Pantaloon's Story.

THERE wasn't a place for gold nor pray'rs—
 We'd six big bobbies to keep 'em back—
 They was nursin' each other in stalls and chairs,
 And the pit was a reg'lar sardine pack.
 A chap got dazed with the din and glare,
 And the sea of faces ev'rywhere.
 And now and agen a woman 'u'd shriek—
 It was always so at Joe's Bespeak.
 There was never a clown a patch on Joe—
 I've played with the lot, and I hought to know.

Why, he'd more reppertee in them bandy shins
 Than parties I know in their bumptious brains;
 He'd tip you one of his rummy grins,
 And you'd suffer from hawful hinternal pains;
 Look in his face, and you'd laugh and cry;
 'Twig him wink, and you'd want to die;

'Ear him do the Little Pig's Squeak,
 And bed was your place for the rest of the week.
 There was never a clown a patch on Joe—
 I've played with the lot, and I hought to know.

The 'ouse was one continuoal roar—

When he tumbled in for his third recall,

They rose, *on massy*, from roof to floor,

And bellered like Bedlam, nobs and all.

The curtain fell, and they stopped to shout,

And 'oller ' Joe!' till the lights was hout.

There was ninety pound, sir, silver and gold—

More nor we reckoned the 'ouse 'u'd 'old.

There was never a clown a patch on Joe—

I've played with the lot, and I hought to know.

Joe never stopped to reckon the blunt,

Nor change his togs, nor nothin' o' that,

But he buttoned his long old coat in front,

And hover his heyebrows jammed his 'at.

We'd counted on glasses—or fizz, may'ap,

For Joe was a hopen-'anded chap—

But through the 'ollerin' roughs houtside,

I twigged him wriggle and dive and slide,

And I says to myself, I says, just so,

'I doubt there's summat amiss with Joe!'

I collared my 'at, and I follered him straight,

And I see him stop at the door, and stand

(Old Mother Cobble's, at number height),

And he pulled the bell with a shaky 'and.

The light from the lamp on the door fell slick,

And I watched his face turn white and sick;

But he never spoke, as the woman said,

'Dead, sir—mother and child—just dead!'

Well, Joe went to 'em a year ago—

There was never a clown a patch on Joe.

F. L.

A STRANGE STORY OF CHRISTMAS FIRELIGHT.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRESENT.

'It's getting dark, isn't it? Won't you light the candles, Barbara? surely you can't see to read any longer.'

'O, yes, I can see for another half hour; it's not "blind man's holiday" yet. I wish it were, in one sense; I wish that you could get a holiday, poor old dear!'

'All right; I'll take one to-morrow, be sure—it would be hard if I could not knock off on Christmas-day—but I'm bound to finish this basket to-night; to-morrow we will rest and enjoy ourselves, come what may.'

'O, yes, of course; but I mean I wish you could get a real holiday, one that would make you independent of this hard manual labour. Besides, it will never bring in enough to keep us going, particularly when we have house-rent to pay, in addition to our other expenses.'

'I don't mind the work, Barby—I rather like it; if I hadn't, I shouldn't have learnt it so thoroughly; Nature always intended me for a handicraftsman rather than a lawyer; a carpenter and joiner, probably; so the work fits the man—but I do wish it would pay a little better, as you say. I don't quite see my way to keeping things going by it, but what else am I to do? What else can I do? I have no literary ability, I am afraid; you see, out of all those articles I have dictated, and you have written, during the last three months, only two have been accepted, and only one paid for—and

such pay! Why, basket-work is better than brain-work, after all, isn't it? "Never mind; keep up your pluck, Bryan West!" that's what I say, and that's what I said to myself when my great pinch came, and a pretty big one it was too. Go on with the book, Barby; and here, Jemmy, hand up that bundle of withes there, that one in the corner; and the wicker-worker, who, sitting with a half-finished basket between his knees, was thus chatting with his wife, took the bundle which a fair-haired mite of three gave him, and broke for a minute into a soft pleasant whistle as he went on with his work.

I think I may as well begin my story here as anywhere else, and though much has to be said concerning it which happened long ere we reach the scene now before my mind's eye, the family picture it presents is so pleasant a one, that I like my curtain to rise upon it.

What I see is this:

There is a long, low, old-fashioned, oak-panelled parlour, having a big bow-window at one end, with a scrap of garden and country high-road for an outlook; but, as the ground is snow-clad, my attention centres upon the interior. It is a humble but not a mean abode; one or two pieces of the furniture, indeed, have been handsome in their day, and though that day is long past, they are none the worse for that, being solid, quaint, and picturesque. Yet they, with many other appointments of the room—a neat writing-table covered with books and papers, to wit—hardly seem to be the sort of surroundings we should

expect at first sight for its inmates, for the whole space of the window-bay is occupied and strewn by the litter and materials of the basket-maker's trade. This gives partially the look of a workshop to what otherwise would be a snugger. Yet, again, there is not the air of a common workshop about it either, nor have the man, woman, and child the air of common people — far from it. Still, once more, the deft and rapid way in which the workman uses his fingers would indicate the skilled craftsman, so that altogether there is an incongruity in the scene, which the progress of my story must needs account for.

She, for instance, sitting there upon the window-seat, with book in hand, upheld to catch the last rays of the short fast-fading winter twilight, is clearly a delicate nurtured lady, whilst the tiny boy, who has toddled back to her knee after doing his father's behest, notwithstanding his rough and over-worn little black suit, is evidently a well-born child.

And then the man himself: there is no mistaking him for anything but a gentleman. Every movement proclaims it. Though he has to bend, of course, over his work, he does so without slouching, and he holds his head so erect, that at first you would think he is looking at something across the room, until, wondering how his hands can work so nimbly, and with such certainty, without the guidance of his eyes, you suddenly discover that though they are open, yet 'their sense is shut.' And his hands too! Hardened and thickened as they have become by constant toil, it has yet failed to obliterate that refinement of outline and proportion, seldom seen save where the breed has some nobility of character, if not of birth, to boast of. Despite the cold weather, he has stripped to his shirt-sleeves in

a regular workmanlike fashion; but, perhaps a little to counteract the chill, he has drawn his stool somewhat out of the window space towards the open old-fashioned grate, whereon smoulders a huge billet of wood.

'Well,' he presently goes on, after his wife had been reading to him again for a few minutes, 'if you won't light up, Barby, come and give this log a stir; rouse it into a blaze. At least we won't stint ourselves in fuel, while we remain under the temporary roof Mr. Richard Halstead has so nobly provided for us; it was a great concession truly for a man with 8000*l.* a year! It is all he will ever do for us, so we will make the most of it, especially as it's Christmas-time; I am satisfied, if he is.'

'Well, you are a forgiving, happy-spirited old darling, Bryan, certainly,' says the wife, as she stirs the log into a blaze. 'I have not half the patience with Richard Halstead that you have. Old as the story is, and often as we talk about it, my feeling never modifies towards him; I think you might search the world through, and hardly hear of colder or more heartless conduct than his to you.'

'It's all that, Barbara, and a good deal more, if you like,' answers the husband, 'and I know—' he was going on, and then paused.

She finishes the sentence for him.

'Yes, you know of more reasons to condemn him than I do, you were going to say. Ah, Bryan, I wonder what it is you *do* know.'

'Never mind that,' he says; 'we won't cloud our minds and dull our days by dwelling on it, particularly these days. At this season, if we can't feel good-will towards all men—and I admit it would be hardly natural for us to feel any towards him—we can at least not go out of our way to say hard

things of him, and I apologise for my sarcasm about his noble generosity. Now go on reading again; Squire Bracebridge at Bracebridge Hall is a pleasanter figure to think of than Richard Halstead, wherever he may be.'

And as the basket-maker again whistles a few low cheery notes, his wife resumes her seat and her book. And whilst she is using up the departing daylight to fill her husband's mind with some of the bright Christmas scenes from Washington Irving's *Sketch-Book*, I will glance back at such points in the past history of Bryan West and his wife as are necessary for you to know ere I relate the remarkable incident which, happening a little later on this Christmas-eve, changed the whole aspect of their life, and made it the most memorable Christmas they ever spent.

CHAPTER II.

THE PAST.

BRYAN WEST had not been blind from birth, and if this sketch of him by his fireside has been realised, neither had he, it will be guessed, been brought up to the trade of basket-making. Up to the age of eight-and-twenty—he was now six-and-thirty—he had studied and followed the law, and he had every reason to believe that his future, independently of his profession, would be well provided for. So that when, seven or eight years before we now see him, the terrible affliction of gradually-increasing blindness fell upon him, and he was compelled to abandon his profession, he was at least free from any anxiety as to ways and means.

The resignation with which he accepted the verdict of the doctors, when they pronounced the disease

to be amaurosis, and therefore incurable, was little short of astounding. For a few months during its early stages he was very miserable indeed; but when it had reached its climax, and had left him only able dimly to distinguish light from dark, day from night, when form, colour, the features of his friends, and all that gives brightness and beauty to the outer world, had faded from his knowledge, and left him in a dense impenetrable mist, he was helpless truly, but far from hopeless. 'After all,' he would say, 'it was the going blind, not the being blind, that was bad to bear,' and he speedily, according to the cheery fashion of his nature, cast about for something to occupy his fingers. He got a fisherman at the seaside place where he stayed one summer to teach him to net, for he insisted that no occupation was worth anything unless it were a useful one, and one the results of which should be as available as if they had come from the hands of a skilled workman with his eyes. By the same token he got instructed in basket-making and wicker-work, and by degrees became sufficiently dexterous to present a full-sized valuable seine-net to the little colony of fishermen amongst whom he had learned the craft, and to provide many a poor home with a bee-hive chair, baskets, and other useful articles. Little did he think how soon he would have to turn his skill to practical account, or how lucky it was for him that he had entered on these handicrafts with the thoroughness and earnestness he did.

But I must hark back to still younger days in his life.

He had no recollection of his parents. He heard that they had died when he was a baby. The woman's face which he earliest remembered was that of his aunt, by

whom he had been brought up, and whose house he called home until her death. He knew her name to be Marrell, Miss Margaret Marrell, when he first came to understand that people had names. He knew also, as his intelligence increased, that she was rich, and that Averley Bower, the house in which she lived, was a very beautiful one, and that it was not everybody who had such a fine house, standing in a grand park, with large trees and bright flowers surrounding it.

A dim memory too had the little Bryan of a second woman's face, not nearly so beautiful as his aunt Margaret's, and which he did not like much, though he knew it was that of an aunt also—sunt Jane; she, however, seldom troubled herself about him, being, as it seemed, too old and ill to play with him, and by degrees he saw her face less and less often, until at last it disappeared entirely, and he almost forgot ever having seen it at all. He was a very happy child, and very fond of his aunt Margaret, she and he being inseparable. Particularly fond was he of the days when they used to wander, these two, far away from the big house, through the park to a smaller house on its boundary called 'the Cottage.' This was locked up and unoccupied at times; but aunt Margaret had the key, and they used to go into a long low room, with a bay-window looking out on a small patch of neglected garden and a high-road, where in bad weather he used to romp and play to his heart's content, whilst she sometimes used to sit and write or work; for this room was partly furnished, and appeared to the little fellow a perfect elysium, because he was allowed to clamber about over the chairs and tables, and make as much noise as he liked. It was a very old house,

and had been the one first built upon the estate, until its original owner had grown rich enough to erect the mansion all amongst the trees there in the middle of the park, and call it Averley Bower. Aunt and nephew spent many happy hours at the Cottage, and up to the time of his going to school even it was always a favourite haunt of little Bryan's.

Just before this event in the boy's life happened, however, there came upon the scene a gentleman who, after a while, took to living in his aunt's house, and whom he was then told to call uncle; and he began to understand that he had married her and given her his name, and that she had become Mrs. Halstead. By and by a baby appeared, a little cousin, who would grow up to be a boy and play with him some day, he was told. But it seemed a long while before this could be, for there was a matter of eight years between the ages of the cousins, and when little Richard Halstead became old enough to have been a companion, the two boys did not get on well together. The younger was inclined to domineer, and used to say that the house and park, and all the rest of it, belonged to his papa, and would be *his* some day; and though Bryan West was too kindly and good-natured to resent in any decided manner these affronts which the precocious little imp early began to put upon him, he felt them keenly. Nor were matters mended by the sudden death of Mr. Halstead, which, happening when Richard was just nine years old, seemed to invest that young gentleman with a vast amount of extra importance and insolence of bearing. But, again, the difference in age kept the cousins sufficiently apart to obviate anything like an open rupture, and you may be sure that Mrs. Halstead, in her

double capacity of aunt and mother, strove her utmost to keep the peace.

So time went on, and Bryan West became a barrister-at-law, and had even obtained his first brief, whilst Richard Halstead was still at college, making ducks and drakes of his mother's money. When she finally became tired of the repeated drains upon her purse, and insisted that he should either go steadily in for honours or leave the university, he complacently adopted the latter course, returning to the maternal roof, and openly expressing his determination, as his education was completed, to work no more, but to lead the life of a gentleman, as he called it, thenceforth.

So he established himself at Averley Bower, hunting and shooting with the best of the county, spending a good deal of time in London during the season, and in no wise balking himself in his wilful will.

Things had remained at this pass for about a year, when the first symptoms of Bryan's affliction obliged him also to return home, and unhappily obliged him, as it would seem, to remain there for an indefinite period.

'Tell me, mother,' said Richard Halstead one morning, soon after this fact had become evident, 'do I understand that you are going to keep Bryan at home here, for ever and aye, doing nothing?'

'Certainly, until he is better, Richard,' was the answer.

'But I thought the doctor said he never would be better.'

'Well, and if unhappily he never is, this must be his home, of course.'

'Then it won't be mine very long, let me tell you. I can't stand a fellow fumbling about all over the place, and getting into my way at every turn; it will be an intolerable nuisance.'

'What a cruel heartless speech, Richard, for you to make! But, alas, I ought not to be surprised; it is what I might have expected from your usual conduct.'

'O, my usual conduct be hanged! it is not different from the conduct of other young fellows with my prospects and position.'

'Prospects!' interposed his mother, with a sudden air of determination quite unusual in her; 'what are your prospects, pray? Surely, if you ever think about them, you must know that they depend entirely on me. Is it not enough that I have foolishly indulged you in all things to the top of your bent, but that you must take this opportunity, when your poor cousin is struck down by a terrible calamity, to object to any arrangements I may choose to make in my own house for his comfort? And then to talk to me about your "prospects"! I think you had better know at once that if it really turns out unhappily that poor Bryan will never be able to resume his profession, or earn his own living, I shall be obliged to provide very much more handsomely for him than I had intended; and therefore you will be obliged to restrain your extravagant propensities a little; your squandering will have to come to an end.'

'Indeed!' said Richard; 'that's the way the wind sets, is it? It is as well I have elicited that much, at any rate; and an ominous scowl stole over his handsome but dissipated-looking face.'

'Quite as well,' continued the mother. 'You are perfectly aware that this property was mine when I married your father, and that he had it settled upon me like the high-minded gentleman that he was. For the sake of your own selfish interests, therefore, you had better conform as graciously as

you can to my views regarding Bryan.'

The recalcitrant son was about to make some offensive reply, when the object of their conversation was here heard tapping his way with his stick on the gravel path just outside the open window of the breakfast-room, within which mother and son were sitting. The likelihood of being overheard, perhaps, restrained Richard's tongue; but if so, he was too late, for the latter part of the conversation had distinctly reached Bryan's ears, as he had walked unheard upon the lawn towards the window, and only when he found that he was the cause of the angry words did he make an effort to reach the gravel path, and so escape from his involuntary eavesdropping. What he had heard, however, could not fail to throw some light on future events.

Another year or two passed in a sort of armed neutrality between the cousins, and towards the latter part of this period, Bryan, by way of making a break in the life at Averley, went away for some months with an attendant to the coast of Norfolk, where he learned that fishing-net and basket-making which was to be of such vital use to him hereafter, and where he also learned how very thin a line it is that separates pity from love. He wrote to his aunt, wondering whether a blind man was justified in marrying a woman without a penny; for the end was, that the daughter of the clergyman in the seaboard parish where he stayed took to reading to him, and after arriving at a due appreciation of the needs and difficulties his affliction entailed upon him, Barbara Morris took to loving him, and naturally he to loving her.

Mrs. Halstead, to whom her nephew's trouble had endeared him more than ever, when she came to

know the particulars concerning Barbara Morris, quite approved of the idea.

'Anything in the world, dear Bry,' she wrote, 'which will alleviate your affliction will be hailed with gratitude by me. I have before now told you what my intentions are towards you; and I may as well farther tell you now that I have recently secured their carrying out in the event of anything happening to me; therefore the question of money need not interfere with your views. In short, I have made a fresh will since you have been away, and by it have provided, as I hope you will think, amply for your comfortable maintenance, for I am quite sure we may say, "God does" not "exact day-labour, light denied." That the companionship and tender care of a wife would be invaluable to you, every one must feel; therefore by all means marry, if you think you have found the right person—and if you please, at once. I should like to have seen your Barbara first, but my health will not allow me to think of a journey into Norfolk, and the idea of her being brought to me for approval would be too detestable. And so, as I have great confidence in your common sense and judgment, and if the preliminary arrangements will admit of it, bring her home here as your wife. It would be a great happiness to me if I thought that you and she could be happy here, and make the "Bower" your home. The house has always been far larger than I needed; and there will be ample room for you and your wife, especially as Richard now seldom honours me with his company. I do not know what he does with himself; and though I cannot hope that he is much steadier than of yore, I hear of fewer debts.'

Within three months after the

receipt of these encouraging words, Mr. and Mrs. West were comfortably established in a suite of rooms set apart for them at Averley Bower, and all, for a time, went, I may say, as merrily as did the marriage-bell which pealed from the tower of that little Norfolk church by the sea, on the morning when Bryan and Barbara became man and wife.

Richard Halstead did not trouble the family with more than one visit during this, perhaps, the brightest period in Bryan's life; and it was only after the expiration of another two or three years, when Mrs. Halstead's health entirely gave way, that her son's appearance at the Bower became more frequent. Meanwhile a little West had come into the world, and though Mr. Richard behaved with distant civility to the 'interlopers,' as he called his cousin and his wife, he did not fail to agitate his mother, when alone with her, by strong expressions of disgust at her household arrangements.

But, at last, the open rupture came, and came the more distressfully, since it happened in the midst of the sorrow in which Bryan was sunk by the fatal termination of his dear and beloved aunt's illness. Upon his venturing a mild remonstrance against the unseemly haste with which Richard Halstead was pushing on the funeral obsequies of his mother, he turned upon Bryan fiercely.

'I will brook no farther interference from you, Bryan,' he said. 'I have stood it long enough, and I will have you to know that I am master here now; you are only here upon sufferance, remember, just as long as I please, and not a moment longer.'

'I will not enter into a discussion with you,' answered Bryan, 'at this moment; you may be quite sure that I shall know when

and how to relieve you from my presence.'

'Even that won't rest with you,' said Richard insolently. 'I shall stand upon my rights as heir to this estate, and my rights will soon put you to the right about, so you had better not oppose me.'

'I say again, I will not hold a discussion with you now; only you will have to remember that I have rights too as well as you.'

'Have you, by Jove! then you'll have to prove them, my friend, I can tell you, and that may be more difficult than you expect,' added the angry Richard; and as Bryan turned to leave the room, these last words seemed to him to have a malicious significance in them.

'More difficult than I expect,' he mused when he was alone. 'What does the fellow mean? There can be no difficulty. My dear aunt's own written words will establish my rights,' he went on, in his cogitation, but not without a certain feeling of anxiety creeping over him.

That night, he and his wife sat later in their room than usual, speaking much of the dear one just gone, but not touching even upon the possibility of any change being necessary in their future domestic arrangements.

Such a likelihood never seemed to cross Barbara's mind, nor would it Bryan's, but for the few words that had passed between him and his cousin that morning. He kept his thoughts to himself, however, whatever they were, and finally his wife, retiring to rest, left him still musing.

Now it being the month of June, and the weather hot, with open windows, rather than fires, prevailing throughout the house, Bryan was somewhat startled about half an hour after Barbara had gone to bed to discover a smell of burning. He rose instinctively, and walked

out on to the landing. Keen of scent as a fox-hound, he proceeded down the corridor whence the odour came. Of course it was nothing to him that the house was in darkness; he knew every step of the way all over it, better than many perhaps with their eyes. He stopped at the door of a room adjoining that of his aunt's bedchamber, where she now lay in her last sleep, and which she had used as her boudoir. He was about to put his hand on the latch in some anxiety, for it was here that the smell was strongest, when the sound of some one moving about within arrested him, and a short low cough, which he well knew, told him it was his cousin.

Keen of hearing as of smell, he distinguished at the same instant the crinkling and tearing of paper as well as its burning. Primed as he had been into a vague state of distrust by Halstead's words of the morning, the discovery of him here in this place, thus occupied in the dead of night with what must be his mother's private papers, aroused a strong suspicion of foul play. Bryan's first impulse was to burst into the room; but he checked himself by a remembrance of all the surrounding circumstances, the presence of death, the terms upon which he was with his cousin, his helpless inability to verify by actual observation what was going on, the possible disturbance of the household at this hour, and the scandal which would arise thereupon.

He wavered for a moment at the door, but then, creeping back to his own apartments, lay down to sleep in a more perturbed state of mind than he had ever known. 'To sleep,' did I say? 'Nature's soft nurse' refused to smooth his pillow that night. The prospect of illimitable calamity opened like a hideous waking vision before him,

and held him spellbound, staring at it in his darkness, throughout the weary hours till morning came. He saw as plainly what was coming as if he had been gifted with double sight, instead of possessing none at all; and since what, by a premonition, was then revealed to him came to pass, I will tell you what it was, instead of following step by step the intricacies of its development.

He saw Richard Halstead in entire indisputable possession of the whole of his aunt's property, and himself, with wife and child, thrown as beggars upon the world. He foresaw that there would be no will forthcoming to justify his claim to the portion she had often promised him, and especially in that letter she wrote to him about his marriage. That will, he felt convinced, his cousin had destroyed, though he dare not accuse him of it, as he would never be able to prove the act. Richard's words, in their arrogant confidence, pointed in that direction, and the discovery Bryan had made that night, of the son dealing with the mother's private papers, suggested when and how the deed was done. Mrs. Halstead would be shown to have died intestate, and that therefore her only son, her next of kin, naturally would inherit all. There might be much protesting, much disputing; but the law on the matter would be unmistakable. The intentions of the deceased might be quoted, and such writings as were extant to show what these were might be produced; but the one writing necessary to confirm them all would be wanting. Some appeal might be made to the heir's generosity; but who would make it? Not he, Bryan. And yet—and yet—he and his could not starve; and he would be penniless, utterly penniless, shorn of his aunt's provision for him, and utterly incapable of

earning his own livelihood, much less a living for three!

'You are here now upon sufferance,' Halstead had said to him that morning, and it would be true. What sufferance could he look for from such a man, even could he subject himself to the indignity of remaining dependent on his cousin's bounty? Yet, short of this, he might be turned out like a dog to starve! For himself in such a case he had no thought; but for her and that little one! Well, their necessity would induce him to submit to much. Yes, he *would* appeal to Richard's feelings for them, if not for himself; if the worst came to the worst, he *must* do so, whatever it might cost him, and the appeal could not be made in vain.

Then this hideous nightmare galloped, with poor Bryan on its back, through such a labyrinth of terrible contingencies, that when his wife woke in the morning she found him in a state so feverish and excited that he had much difficulty in allaying her anxiety, and in persuading her that nothing was amiss. 'For after all,' he said to himself when he arose, and the cheery hopeful element in his nature again asserted itself, 'these fancies are but the result of a fevered imagination and extreme nervous depression, and it would be unfair to let my dear wife share such visionary troubles with me.'

But, alas, as I have hinted, the troubles were not visionary; each and all of them turned out almost identically as the blind man had but too surely foreseen. Indeed, as they began actually to develop, and he beheld the terrible anticipations of that night fulfilled step by step, his bright hopeful spirit was so clouded, that he had no heart to make any firm show of resistance.

True, he ascertained from the

family solicitor that that gentleman had executed the will Mrs. Halstead had referred to in the letter to her nephew before quoted; 'but,' added the man of law, 'I left it with Mrs. Halstead at her request, and I saw her deposit it amongst other papers in the dayenport in her boudoir.' True, Bryan West instituted at his cousin's request the most rigid search for that will, every facility being given him for having it found; but it never was found of course, and Bryan knew it never would be. What was the use, therefore, of protesting, or contesting the rights of the next of kin, particularly as he lost no opportunity of stating he was determined to stand upon them?

Within three weeks after the funeral, and when Bryan knew there was nothing for it but to accept the situation, Richard Halstead said, in his usually offensive arrogant manner,

'I am going to sell Averley Bower, Bryan, just as it stands, furniture and all, so you'll have to clear out like the rest of us before Christmas.'

'I have been expecting to hear something to this effect,' answered Bryan, 'and I should be glad to know what you propose doing with regard to me and mine.'

'What I propose? O, I have nothing to propose: you are your own master, I presume; I am not your keeper; you are not dependent upon me!'

'Then on whom else am I dependent?' said Bryan, biting his lip, and turning his blank eyes in the direction where sat his wife and child; 'to whom else have they to look?'

'Nay, nay,' said Barbara, 'do not appeal in that key; if the worst comes to the worst, we can jog along somehow.'

'Yes, of course you can,' cried

Richard, with a kind of sarcastic imitation of her hopeful tone; 'spoken like a woman of spirit, by Jove. Yes, of course you can! You can turn the basket- and net-making to account now, and I intend that you shall; and you might write too—write books, you know, and that sort of thing.'

'Doubtless,' said Bryan, making a strong effort to control his indignation, 'we shall be able to maintain ourselves after a fashion; but, Richard, surely you must see, in common justice, that you are bound in a certain measure to rectify the unhappy consequences to me arising from my dear aunt's dying intestate.'

'I am bound!' returned Richard angrily; 'upon my word, I like that!' and then, checking himself, he went on more calmly,

'Now, see here, Bryan West, I am bound to do nothing but what I choose, and what I do *not* choose is to maintain you and your family; we won't discuss the matter, so understand *that* distinctly. I am not going to be lived upon any longer; you will have to provide for yourself for the future.'

'But your dear mother's intentions were far different, you must know.'

'What my mother's intentions were it is impossible for any man to tell.'

'But we know,' continued Bryan, 'we have corroborative testimony of what they were: her letter—Mr. Crawley, the solicitor who drew up her will, knows what its contents were—has stated them; you cannot pretend—'

'No, I pretend nothing,' again broke in Richard; 'I simply stand upon my rights, and once for all I tell you I will not discuss this question farther; you must make arrangements to leave this house before Christmas.' He was about to quit the room, when he return-

ed, and, as if slightly ashamed of the tone he was adopting, continued,

'But, see here, I don't want to inconvenience you more than is necessary, and therefore, until you have time to look about you, you can have the Cottage to live in; it's fairly well furnished, and you can remain there until the place is sold—until, that is, the sale is completed, which will not be till Christmas. But it will be better for you to go there pretty soon, so as to be out of the way here when they make the inventory and all that; the place will be dismantled and quite uninhabitable in less than a month, whereas the Cottage can remain untouched to the last.'

With these words, the speaker retired. To Barbara's surprise, Bryan gave no vent to his indignation.

'No,' he said, 'we must be prudent, dear, and not make matters worse than they are: they are bad enough, for we have not a penny in the world we can call our own; at present we have nothing to live upon, and we must face the fact. I have been on the look-out for something of this kind ever since I saw how I was placed; therefore I am, in a measure, prepared.'

'But you will never go to the Cottage to live?' interposed his wife.

'Indeed I will, and at once. As this scoundrel said,' and Bryan muttered the words between his teeth, 'it will give me time to turn round. I've got lots of life and health in me, and I'm not going to be beaten; I have faced a worse business than this, and now that I know *this* is inevitable, please God I shall be equal to it.'

And he was.

Briefly then, within a day or two, he moved into the Cottage. Though never used, and in some degree dismantled, it was in fair

repair, and very little made it available as an abode, for his wants and habits since his affliction had become of the simplest. But he was to be there only upon sufferance (till a little time after Christmas, Richard had said), and so he would have to look out for himself henceforth.

Meanwhile, with the cheery earnestness and determination of character which distinguished him, he threw himself into his new position, almost without a single regretful look back, when once, as he had said, he had faced the inevitable.

He set to work to open channels for any literary efforts he might make as a means of adding to his income; 'but,' he said, with a laugh, 'I shall stick to the basket-making; I can work with my fingers whilst I dictate; I shall become a patent double-action machine, a weaver of wicker as well as of wonders and wisdom.'

And it was lucky he thus decided; for, long before he had touched a penny from the labour of the pen, the basket-making had begun to yield results. He had established a connection with the trade, and though the pay was very poor, by the time we see him on this Christmas-eve the wicker-work had become the chief means of maintenance. Considering, however, the way in which husband and wife had formerly lived, it is not surprising that the reduced circumstances in which they found themselves were already becoming very painful. But they met them with brave hearts, and though filled with anxieties for the future, and contrasting painfully, as could not be helped, the present Christmas with their last, they were determined, as we have seen, to make the best of it.

CHAPTER III.

THE FUTURE.

WHILE we have been travelling back through this history, the daylight has all departed from the bay-window of the long, low, oak-panelled parlour in the Cottage.

With its last gleam, Barbara shut the book, saying,

'There! it is "blind man's holiday" at last; I can't see another word!'

'Light up, then,' said Bryan, 'or—no, pull your chair round alongside of me, and let's have a quiet talk in the gloaming; we don't want much light to do that by; we are on even ground there, anyhow, Barby. With the night comes the blind man's time, and I can go on with my work, which you can't, old lady! I'm the better man of the two, now!'

'You are at all times, dear, I think,' answered his wife, as, giving him a kiss, she sat down beside him. 'I'm sure it is marvellous the way in which you keep up your spirits.'

'O, no; what's the use of being cast down? it does no good. But it's very cold; you may as well give the log another stir, or that will be cast down. There, now, Jemmy, sit in your mother's lap and be still for a bit, if you can.'

The little boy had been scrimmaging about in the darkness and making a considerable racket for the last few minutes, and calling loudly, 'Light tandle, light tandle!' but now that the newly-stirred fire lighted up the room, he contentedly obeyed his father, and sat patiently in his mother's lap, watching eagerly the brilliant many-coloured flames leaping high up the chimney from the fresh-turned log. His eyes followed with keen delight the changes and minglings of the varied hues as they shot out with a spluttering crackle—now purple,

now blue, now melting into green, and then turning with the subtlest delicacy of gradation into amethyst or rose colour, and so on to pale primrose, deep gold, or blood-red crimson. He clapped his tiny palms for very joy at last, and entertained in baby fashion that mother and father should enjoy the spectacle as he did.

By a strange perversity he seemed more anxious that his father should behold the gay display than his mother, for he had not quite mastered the fact that such delights were beyond his parent's reach, and a pang went through Barbara's heart at the child's perverse insistence upon the sadly impossible. So she faced him round on her lap, and tried to draw his attention to the effect the light was having on some of the old-fashioned furniture and panelling.

'See, Jemmy,' she cried, 'how the light is dancing over the top of the table, and along the backs of the chairs, and up and down the wall in the corner there! Look there! jump down now, and see if you can catch it!'

Whereupon the imp descended, and toddled off, big with the idea, no doubt, of capturing a special gleam of light, which, more than all the rest, seemed determined to wriggle its way into the darkest corner of the room and light up fitfully the remotest recesses of the beadings and carvings, which here and there had made decorative in former days the wainscoting and polished panels.

Little Jemmy (whose name, by the bye, was no more Jemmy than yours or mine; but his father always called him so—as he said in his fun—for that very reason), after squatting on the ground, presently began to call out lustily, 'Boofer 'ing, boofer 'ing!' with such persistency, that Bryan said at last,

'What has that child got hold of? Go and see.'

Barbara rose and went to the corner, and saw the little fists patting the ring-shaped ornament running along the beading which formed the lower edge of the wainscot. She watched for a moment, with a mother's smiling satisfaction, the dumpy little fingers paddling away from circle to circle, and cried out,

'Ah, Jemmy is playing the piano, I see; "boofer" piano, but rather dusty;' and stooping to kiss the mite's cheek, returned to her husband's side.

After a few minutes' farther chat Bryan dropped the basket from between his knees, and, giving himself a shake and a stretch, stood up with his back to the fire.

'It's very cold,' he said; 'regular Christmas weather. Jemmy, you scamp, what a row you are making! What is it you've got hold of that tickles you so? for the child had continued at intervals his original remark, and just now was reiterating it with greater vehemence than ever. 'Here, tell me what you are up to; let daddy feel "boofer 'ing!"' Then he went slowly across, feeling his way by the wall, to the corner where the child was still squatting.

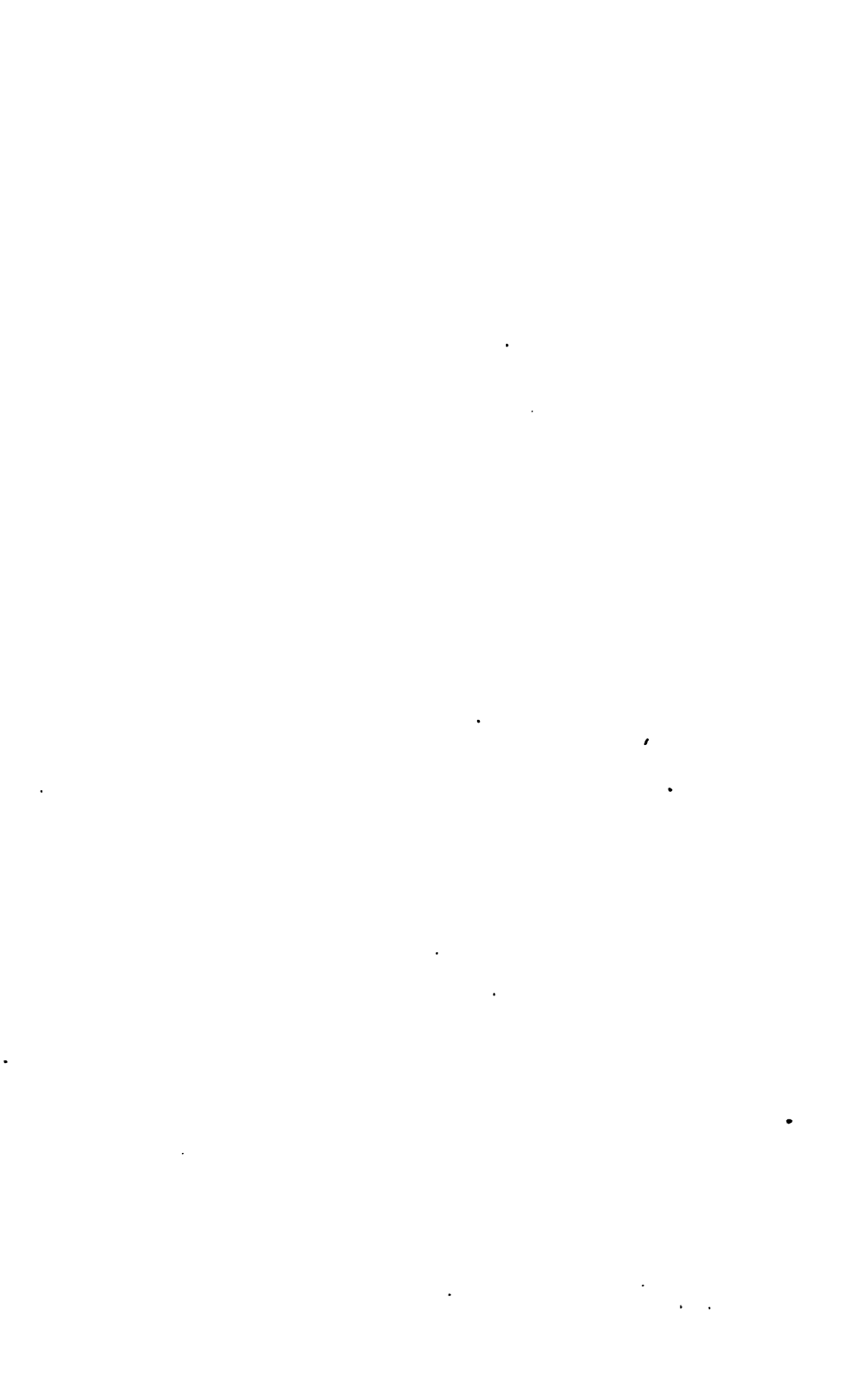
Led by the little voice, his hand dropped on the curly head with as much accuracy as if it had been guided by his eyes. Then he knelt down, and, taking hold of the little arm, said,

'Now put daddy's hand on "boofer 'ing.'"

Presently his fingers were drawn along the ornament backwards and forwards several times.

'O, yes, I feel; "boofer 'ings, boofer 'ings,"' he went on; 'but you need not make such a row about them;' and he was on the point of withdrawing his hand, when he suddenly found that the







"Oh, Barbara, my dear," he went on excitedly, stretching out his hands across the table—"let me feel these papers, let me touch that last one you read; there, this. Is this it?"

See 'A Strange Story of Christmas Firelight.'

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dummy forefinger of his son had hooked itself deep into one of the sunken circular forms of the beadings, and had raised the rim of it perceptibly. The quick and sensitive touch revealed the fact on the instant, and now, hooking his own finger in above the boy's, the father discovered that sure enough there *was* a practical ring, stiff and clogged by time and dust, but clearly intended to be raised, although, whilst flat, it formed the edge of the carved device.

'O, O!' Bryan cried, 'there is a real ring, then, and you are right, Jemmy, after all! I wonder if there are any more like it?' and his fingers quickly tried the rims of a dozen or so of the similar patterns right and left. 'No,' he said, 'this is the only one; what can it be for?' Then he gave it a slight tug—it yielded a little; he gave it another—it seemed as if it were coming out of the woodwork, and a third and stronger pull did actually bring it away; but with it came the lower side of the panel immediately adjoining the beading to which it was attached, and which then opened upwards upon hinges at the next division like a cupboard-door.

An involuntary exclamation of surprise escaped him.

'You must get a candle now, Barbara, anyhow,' he cried. 'Why, Jemmy has made a discovery, and no mistake! It's a secret panel, and so cunningly contrived. I wonder if there's anything inside?'

Barbara, all excitement, by this time had lighted a candle and was looking in.

'O, yes,' she called out, in a minute, 'there are several things; papers, and a tin box, and I don't know what! Let me get them—hold the panel up!'

When she had cleared the little recess of its contents, she carried them in a heap to the table; whilst

Bryan, continuing to examine with his fingers the movement and construction of the door, said, half to himself,

'Why, it is somewhere hereabouts that my dear aunt's little writing-table used to stand years ago! I have seen her sit in this corner writing for hours when I was not much bigger than Jemmy is now. As I have often told you, Barbara, she used to bring me to this room to play in those happy old days. Yes, certainly, it was in this corner, but I don't remember a panel opening like this—how should I?—such a secret contrivance, unless I had been shown!'

'Of course not,' cried Barbara; 'but come and let us see what all these things are about; they are smothered with dust, and have not been touched for years, I should think.'

Husband and wife then sat down to examine them; she reading a word here and there, and he passing his fingers rapidly over one packet after another.

First, they came upon several bundles of letters—some tied up with a blue ribbon—in a man's handwriting, and directed to 'Miss Margaret Marrell, Post-office, Craig Leith, near Durham,' and bearing the Sunderland postmark, with dates from 1826 to 1827; some unfolded and tied with string, and in what Barbara immediately recognised as Mr. Halstead's handwriting—old love-letters, clearly.

'Strange, strange,' they both exclaimed, 'and so long hidden away!'

'See what's in this tin box,' said Bryan, blowing the dust off it and opening the lid with some difficulty as he handed it to her.

She took from it several folded and closely written sheets of letter-paper, and from between these two long slips or printed forms with certain names and dates filled in.

Pouncing on one of these, as a name caught her eye, she exclaimed,

'Why, this is a marriage certificate, surely! What can it mean?'

'Well, what marriage certificates usually mean, I suppose,' broke in Bryan somewhat impatiently. 'Read.'

'Yes, of course. But these names—whose names can these be? Was your aunt married twice?'

'Married twice? Nonsense, no! What are you driving at? Read, read, do,' said Bryan, more petulantly than before.

And then she read forth from the usual form of such documents the simple fact, that on the 5th of February 1827, were married by license, at the parish church of Whitburn, Sunderland, John Bryan Sturry of that parish, and Margaret Marrell of the parish of Craig Leith, Durham, and that the ceremony was duly witnessed and attested to by the parish clerk and the sexton.

'Sturry! John Bryan Sturry!' exclaimed the blind man. 'I never heard the name before! And married to Margaret Marrell!—there could not have been two Margaret Marrells! I don't understand. Read it again, Barbara.'

She did so, and then cried out,

'Listen, listen; here is a memorandum pinned to it in the same man's handwriting as those letters directed to her. Perhaps it explains;' and she read thus:

'“I forgot to give you the enclosed; take great care of it; put it in some place of safety, lest, whilst I am at sea and you alone and unprotected, any doubt should be thrown upon our marriage. We do not know what your sister may say in her anger at what you have done, and this will be a proof that I am, at least, not the double-dyed scoundrel she probably thinks

me. I send this ashore by the pilot. A thousand times God bless you! In less than three months I shall be with you again.

“J. B. S.”

Written across this in very faded ink,' goes on Barbara, 'in what is certainly your aunt's handwriting, are these lines:

“These are the last words I ever had from him; we had then been married not quite a month, and I was seventeen years old. I cannot bear to destroy them nor it, even though its discovery should be death to all my sister's plans.”

'God in heaven!' cried Bryan. 'Then she must have been married twice. Are you sure it is in her handwriting?'

'Certain,' was the answer. 'But stay, here is a quantity more on some separate sheets; they seem to refer to it. Let me see, where do they begin?—O, here, I suppose.'

'Read, read, then,' broke in Bryan, with impatience; and she began:

“Upon the eve of taking one more momentous step, I come upon these relics of the past. What is to be done with them? Their discovery now would be more than ever fatal! Yet still I have not the heart to destroy them! It is very foolish—weak to a degree; but, after all, he had my first love, therefore the truest, best, man can ever have from woman. No; I must keep them, and I know a place where I can do so without risk of their being found during my life, and I shall have the satisfaction of knowing they are in safety. But when I die!—well, then I pray God they may fall into hands that may respect them, keeping my secret if no harm be done thereby. And the secret? What is it? Let me plainly set it down in black and white, and try

and read it with the eyes of one strange to it all, and see if it looks like a heinous crime. Yes, I will.

“MY SECRET.

“No matter what led to it, but I made a rash and imprudent marriage very much beneath my station when I was only seventeen; ran away from the home of an elder sister with whom I lived. Within six weeks only of our wedding-day my husband died—was drowned at sea—fell overboard, for he was a captain of a merchant ship plying between Sunderland and Copenhagen. My sister, with more forgiveness than could have been expected, then suggested my returning to her and resuming my old life.

“This, for a time, was not possible, seeing that within the year the responsibility of another—a new and young life—would come upon me. When we knew that this would be so, my sister, who was a hard-natured woman of strong character, took a very decided step. She sent me abroad to Dinan in Brittany in charge of a trustworthy old nurse; sold her property, which lay in the north of Durham; bought a small estate in Essex, called Averley Bower, within fourteen miles of London, and, about a year after my little boy was born, had me back to live with her in her new home, but upon very strange and cruel conditions.

“She was unmarried and nearly twenty years older than I, and had inherited our parents’ fortune.

“‘You will come back,’ she wrote to me, ‘in your maiden name. As far as may be we will wipe out, obliterate from the knowledge of the world, your unhappy act. There is no need for you to be disgraced by bearing his name; but as Margaret Marrell you may live honoured and respected in a neighbourhood where we are entirely unknown, and where no

whisper of your rash imprudent marriage will reach the ears of any one. Of course you will never be able to marry again; your penalty, your atonement will be, at the age of twenty, to renounce all hope of wedded life, to remain what you will seem to be—a spinster; but you will see no hardship in this if your love for the dead man was as strong as you professed. “You cannot care,” you have often said, “for any other living creature.” Be it so! You may live with and be consoled by his memory, that can disgrace nobody but yourself; for, for your own sake, as Miss Margaret Marrell, you will keep it to yourself. As to your child, in twelve months’ time, when he will be two years old, he shall be brought to you—to us; but remember distinctly that *he is our nephew*, the son of a sister who lived and died abroad. Our old nurse will keep him where he is, therefore, for another year; but, if you accept these my conditions, you must return to me at once; but upon no other terms will I ever set eyes upon you again. If you refuse this we are henceforth strangers, and you must shift for yourself and child; for no farther help, in any shape, will you have from me.

““One other thing I would urge upon you in weighing your decision—it is to remember what I have sacrificed to make the plan I propose feasible. I have given up my old home, with all its strong associations, and have come in the autumn of my life to live amongst strangers, and I have done this in order that you may be restored to respectability and your good name.’

“What choice had I but to accept her terms? I was penniless, and entirely dependent upon her. What else could I do? and at least I should not be separated from my child. I thought of that

before all. I returned to my sister's new home in Essex as Miss Margaret Marrell; my little boy followed me in due course. I had had him christened Bryan, after his father, at the English Protestant church at Dinan, where he was born. But we, my sister Jane and I, according to her plan, ignored his real surname and substituted that of West for it, as one that from its familiarity would provoke no comment."

Greatly agitated, the blind man here grasped his wife's arm.

'What am I listening to, Barbara?' he cried. 'Am I dreaming? are we both dreaming?'

'Be calm, dearest,' said the wife, 'and let me finish; be patient.' Then she continued:

"So little Bryan West was our nephew, the offspring of our dead sister, and whom we naturally had the greatest tenderness for. O, the lie answered splendidly! The plan had been cunningly thought out; it was executed to a nicety, and its success showed how shrewd and far-seeing my sister Jane was.

"Thus for several years we lived to all outward seeming very happily. We went very little into society, but we accepted the civilities of some of the people who called on us.

"Suddenly my sister died. We had no relations; she left everything to me. I inherited all she possessed; but, what was dearer than all, I had my freedom.

"Is it wonderful, then, that I, an heiress, with 8000*l.* a year, now became an object of interest in the county? and is it wonderful that at the age of five-and-twenty I shrank from encountering a life-long loneliness? or that I have at length yielded to the fervent desire of one who loves me well that I should become his wife?

"Yet ought I not to declare the truth? Of course I ought; but I have not the moral courage, at this the eleventh hour, to break down the sham, the lie, under which I have been living in apparent maidenhood for so long. What would be said of me? what would *he* think of me? Besides which, my story would not be believed; it is so strange, so unlikely, would involve much trouble to prove, and all for—what? Therefore it is that, unwise, illegal, wrong as it may be, I am going to the altar within a week from this day for the second time as Margaret Marrell!

"Here is my secret, then! How will it appear, should it ever be read by other eyes than mine? How does it appear to me? Criminal without a doubt! God forgive me, and may He look upon my sin at least as venial!

"June 6, 1834."

Bryan sprang up; his feet as his wife finished reading the paper.

'Good God!' he cried, 'if this be true, I, Bryan Sturry (West is no name of mine), and not Richard Halstead, am the eldest son, and in the absence of any will I am the rightful heir to all the property. This will turn the tables indeed, Richard Halstead! But, Barbara, my dear,' he went on excitedly, stretching out his hands across the table, 'let me feel these papers, let me touch that last one you read; there, this—is this it? and where is the marriage certificate? this slip—is it that? You spoke of two—is there one of my birth? Quick, see, see!'

'Yes, here,' she cried, taking up the second long printed form, and reading again the simple fact duly attested that at the English Protestant church at Dinan in Brittany was registered, on the 31st of October 1827, the birth

of 'Bryan, son of John Bryan Sturry and Margaret his wife.'

'Put my hand on my name!' exclaimed the blind man; 'let me touch it, let me touch it!'

But for several moments his hand so shook with agitation, and he moved and tossed the papers about so much, that his wife was unable to give them to him in their proper order or let him feel them in their distinctness one from the other.

'Dear Bry,' she said, 'don't excite yourself like this. Be calm; this is not like you, not like your own old patient manner of taking things.'

'No, Barbara, no, very likely; but only think what it all means, and what I must feel! She was my mother—my mother!' and he buried his face in his hands.

Then his wife caressed and soothed him, and for a minute nothing was said. His heart was very full, and the filial instincts so long denied their rightful flow welled up and for a time quite unmanned him. Barbara was the first to speak.

'Ah, now, dear Bry,' she said, 'her great love for you is all explained; nor could yours have been greater for her than it was had you known what she knew.'

'Yes, darling,' he said, now turning his face towards his wife; 'how merciful, too, it is that I, that we, and not strangers, found these papers! It is as if she had delivered her secret to me straight from her own lips; as though, when she was so strangely impelled to write this, her self-accusation, she had felt that it would fall only into loving hands.'

'Truly,' said Barbara, 'and does it mean—'

'It means,' said Bryan, interrupting her, with a slight renewal of his vehemence and excitement—'it means ease and comfort where we have had anxiety and hard times.'

'But Richard Halstead?' inquired the wife.

'Richard Halstead is a scoundrel whom I shall have great pleasure—but, ah, God help him! he is my brother! What am I saying? Yes, my brother! I can do nothing harsh towards him,' went on Bryan more calmly, as he sat down to the table and took up the papers with some deliberation; 'only I'll have my rights, as he would say.'

'It is a marvellous discovery,' cried Barbara.

'Yes, and all through little Jemmy catching sight of that shining ring by the light from the blazing log,' went on Bryan, facing round to the corner where the young gentleman in question was disporting himself with the movable panel. 'I suppose it does shine, or else the child would never have seen it?'

'I am not sure,' said Barbara, walking up and examining the ring of the panel, as she dropped it into its proper place. 'O, yes, it does a little, a very little, more than the rest; I see now I look at it close; still, I never noticed it.'

'No, my love, I daresay; but it isn't always those who have their eyes who see the most; it was left for me to find, of course. It is always the blind man who finds what other people can't. It is the blind clerk at the Post Office who deciphers all the illegible addresses.'

'Nonsense!' said Barbara, laughing.

'A fact, I assure you; at least, he's called the "blind clerk;" now you know the reason. Here, Jemmy, after all you are the hero; come and kiss your father instantly.'

The boy obeyed and tumbled on to his father's knee.

'Dear me, Barbara, if you had lighted the candles when I told you that I was sure you could not

see, and you said it was not yet "blind man's holiday" — that holiday we have invoked and joked about and longed for so often — why,' and one of his brightest flashes of fun and intelligence lighted up Bryan's face — 'why, *this* blind man would never have had such a holiday in prospect as he has now!'

Then he set down the boy and rose and hugged his wife, caught hold of the boy again and tossed him into the air, until his little head went perilously, more than once, near the low ceiling. Then, when his wife cautioned him, he laughed and said,

'O, I won't hurt him, trust me! shall I, Jemmy? but I must do what I like with my own. And now, let's have tea and supper both together, everything at once, all the luxuries of the season; and what a season for us! what a Christmas-eve! we shall not forget this present year of grace in a hurry.'

Then he hugged his wife again, tossed up his boy again, and actually capered about the room with him in his arms, until, bringing his shins into contact with the furniture, and getting his feet entangled in some of the stray wicker-work, he finally blundered back to the chair by the table and sat down fairly exhausted.

'Dear Bryan,' then said his wife, 'be a little more rational. Suppose now, after all, that we should not be able to prove this?'

'Not able to prove it?' he interposed. 'Why, my dear, if your eyes have not deceived you, and you have not been reading some *Arabian Nights' Entertainment* tale all this while, there will not be much more difficulty in proving it than in my eating my supper, only it will take longer. No, the registers at Whitburn and—what's the name of the place where I was

born?'—and he put his hand out amongst the papers again—'at Di-Dinan? ah, that's it!—the registers will prove it, or else I was brought up to the law for nothing. I shall put the whole case into the hands of my old master; and—and—prove it indeed!'

'But Richard Halstead?' again interposed the wife.

'Halstead?' Bryan repeated, with a return of his graver mood; 'O, he'll fight it of course; but he hasn't a leg to stand on, though he'll give us lots of trouble, and it will take time naturally; but long before next Christmas, you'll see, I shall be master of Averley Bower, and I shall have him at my feet.'

'But you won't do anything harsh, Bryan?' said his wife gently, laying her hand on his arm.

'Did you ever know me do anything very harsh, Barby?'

'No,' she answered.

'No! very well, then,' he added, taking her face between his hands and kissing her; 'but I will make him eat humble pie. And now, perhaps you will let me eat something; I have not had such an appetite, I don't know when! Clear the decks, put all these papers carefully together, as if they were the most precious things (as they are) that you ever handled, draw the curtains, throw a fresh log on the fire, and let us have supper. And here, here, Jemmy, come here again, you young scamp! come and sit on your father's knee for a minute and have another look at the "boofer" flames, flames that have lighted you, my little son, to fortune!'

And so, as the loving wife is doing her blind husband's behest, and as he sits dancing his boy on his lap, I will let the curtain fall, as it rose, on this family picture.

You may take my word for it that it all came right, and, as Bryan

Sturry prophesied, long before the next Christmas he was in full possession of his rights, as master of Averley Bower.

His first step was to obtain through the proper channels an injunction to stay the fortunately non-completed sale of the property. Very little served to scare Richard Halstead from his first blustering intention of defying his stepbrother's claim and defending the threatened action.

Otherwise, perhaps, the facts here narrated would have come before the public in a very different shape, and the great case of 'Sturry *versus* Halstead' would have occupied the columns of the news-

papers for weeks, and have been hereafter quoted as one of the most romantic of the *causes célèbres* of our day. But, as it was, Richard Halstead gave comparatively no trouble, and after a little reflection gladly accepted the liberal settlement which, we may be sure, in the generosity of his heart, Bryan was ready to make upon him. Nor is it necessary to add that not a breath ever escaped the blind man's lips to living soul (not even to his wife) with reference to the well-founded conviction he has of how Richard Halstead had been occupied amongst his mother's papers that memorable night in her boudoir.



BOGEY.

(From the French.)

THE hour is late, the mother from home ;
Why tarrieth he in the waning light ?
Down on the lawn where the laurels gloom,
He promised to come and sing to-night.
Hark to that rogue of a sister's cry !
Will the child keep ever a wakeful eye ?
‘ Sleep, tiny, sleep ; Bogey will take
All little girls that he finds awake. *(Bis.)*

This naughty old Bogey, whenever he comes,
Kills, as he rideth his terrible round
In the dead of night through the children's rooms,
And eats all the babies who won't sleep sound.
His big black eyes are aflame with light,
And all who behold him they shriek with fright.
Sleep, tiny, sleep ; Bogey will take
All little girls that he finds awake.’ *(Bis.)*

‘ Nay,’ says the little one, ‘ Lucy, nay ;
For I've seen the Bogey from over the blind.
He looks not a bit like what you say ;
He has big black eyes, which are, O, so kind !
I peep when his sweet sad voice I hear ;
For he sings of love, so I need not fear.’
Sleep, tiny, sleep ; Bogey will take
All little girls that he finds awake. *(Bis.)*

The sister reddens, then softens her voice :
‘ Sleep, my darling, 'tis time for rest ;
Sleep, and to-morrow I'll give you choice
Out of all my ribbons you love the best.’
Down in its pillows the roguish head
Nestled, and softly the tiny said,
‘ I'm asleep, I'm asleep ; so now, dear Lu,
Your black-eyed Bogey can come to you.’ *(Bis.)*

W. E. M.





